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ABSTRACT

The National Forum on Effective Urban and Metropolitan Schooling met to discuss building communities and curriculum as part of a larger effort to support an agenda of achievement, competency, and success for urban education. This report of that 1989 meeting is divided into two parts. The first part lists and defines the following 10 themes for the new urban agenda: (1) promoting integrated decentralization; (2) expanding access to knowledge; (3) activating learning; (4) reconstructing functional communities; (5) strengthening team development; (6) collaborating for inquiry; (7) redefining knowledge; (8) revamping traditional assessment; (9) sustaining cosmetic and/or systemic change; and (10) energizing political advocates. The report's second part presents edited versions of reports of the work groups that were presented in the final plenary session of the forum. The following are the topics of those study groups: (1) the requirements for building communities for effective change in urban schools; (2) mathematics and science; (3) reading comprehension revisited; (4) curriculum and instruction; (5) role of assessment in educational outcomes; (6) improving thinking skills of students; (7) community issues related to urban reform; (8) the role of business and foundations in school reform; and (9) the role of government in building school communities. The report also includes a description of the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education. (JB)

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A REPORT OF
THE NATIONAL FORUM
ON EFFECTIVE URBAN
AND METROPOLITAN
SCHOOLING:
BUILDING COMMUNITIES
AND CURRICULUM

THEMES FOR A CONTINUING CONVERSATION: THE URBAN AGENDA OF SUCCESS

*Sponsored by Teachers College,
Columbia University,
The College Board, and the
National Urban Alliance for
Effective Education*

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*Promoting Integrated Decentralization
Expanding Access to Knowledge
Activating Learning
Reconstructing Functional Communities
Strengthening Team Development
Collaborating for Inquiry
Redefining Knowledge
Revamping Traditional Assessment
Sustaining Cosmetic and/or Systemic Change
Energizing Political Advocates*

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The focus of the National Forum on Effective Urban and Metropolitan Schooling was building communities and curriculum. In addition to the special nature of its focus, the forum was different from most conferences in several other significant ways. Perhaps most important, the participants reflected the heterogeneity of the people involved in the work of making urban and metropolitan schools successful. This was not the usual meeting of a segment or a faction of the school community; it was a gathering of the school community. Too often, conferences are targeted to one group of professionals or to one level of schooling, so that high school principals meet in one city and elementary school parents meet in another city. At the forum, we all came together and talked to one another. The purpose was to support the emerging agenda for urban schools—an agenda that emphasizes achievement, competency, and success, in place of the minimalist, deficit, remedial program that has dominated the urban agenda for the past few years.

The forum was different in still another way. Our community, thanks to the power of modern technology, extended beyond the meeting rooms of the university. Teachers, parents, government officials, interested citizens, and administrators across the country participated with their colleagues via satellite in a PBS telecast that considered the building of effective school communities.

To capture the nature and spirit of these differences, this report of the forum also has a different character. It is not a compilation of official papers or a collection of

essays about what people might have said, but an attempt to capture the essence of the conversation that was begun at the forum and that continues among the members of the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education including The College Board, Teachers College, and educational systems and interest groups across the nation.

To provide a framework for that continuing conversation, the first part of this report presents some themes that may be helpful as a refresher for those who attended the public forums and the work sessions over the four days we were convened here on campus. A review of these themes should also be useful to those who would now like to join the alliance in building a new agenda for urban schooling.

In the second part of the report, we present slightly edited versions of what was actually reported from the workgroups in the final plenary session of the forum. In fairness to the reporters (listed at the beginning of the section), it should be acknowledged that they were not given an opportunity to edit their own remarks.

Speaking from the University, we think there is a special role for cooperative research in the alliance. In the section concerned with "Collaborating for Inquiry," we discuss a possible role for faculty from the participating universities. Working with local school professionals as partners, local schools might become centers where field-based research could support the development of a new urban agenda by documenting school successes and by supporting research-based professional development experiences for people in urban communities.

Finally, we wish to thank some special people and foundations that made it possible for us to record our conversations and to report them to the larger community. Through its support of a program to promote minority leadership for urban secondary schools, the Aaron Diamond Foundation made possible pre-conference seminars, attendance by minority fellows, and, in part, the publication of this report. We are also grateful for the support of The American Telephone and Telegraph Foundation. We also thank Eric Cooper for his vision and energy, which served as the glue that held us together as we worked on this landmark forum for persons committed to the development of a new agenda for urban education.

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THEMES FOR A CONTINUING CONVERSATION: THE URBAN AGENDA OF SUCCESS

Since the purpose of the national forum was to stimulate a conversation about the nature and need for an emerging urban agenda that focused on effectiveness rather than on deficits and failures, a comprehensive report of the conference would need to scan the many schools across the country that were represented—directly or indirectly—in that conversation. This is not such a report. Instead, as a statement of themes, it represents a kind of turning point in a conversation, rather than its finale. It is intended to invite response, other versions of what was said and heard, better ideas, more constructive notions that can promote more successful schooling for youngsters in urban settings.

The themes that emerged from our forum and that can serve as the anchor of our continuing conversation are noted below.

1. Promoting Integrated Decentralization
2. Expanding Access to Knowledge
3. Activating Learning
4. Reconstructing Functional Communities
5. Strengthening Team Development
6. Collaborating for Inquiry
7. Redefining Knowledge
8. Revamping Traditional Assessment
9. Sustaining Cosmetic and/or Systemic Change
10. Energizing Political Advocates

These themes suggest the central thrust of a new urban agenda. Linking them was a single idea, articulated in different ways throughout the forum: the quest for "authenticity"—of concern, of purpose, of instruction, of evaluation and of assessment. The notion of authenticity was contrasted with what is conventional, legal, in compliance with regulations, or ordinarily experienced. Authenticity suggests the notion of aligning schooling and its many related activities with the young people who actually live in the schools, with the major themes of research and with characteristics of the adult world of work in this information age.

This concern with authenticity suggests that schools as experienced by students and teachers are out of step with the major themes emerging from educational research and from social policy that focuses on successful schooling. The concern for authenticity suggests that the processes of schooling are too isolated from the worlds of knowledge and adult pursuits. Perhaps most important, the concern for authenticity suggests that the image of "urban youth" that is embedded in our policies, our testing programs, and our instructional materials and that "drives" local school practices and instructional strategies is wrong, and destructive.

Implicit in these themes is a new sense of school leadership, in form and substance. With the strong focus on the kaleidoscopic nature of a strong educational community, the notion of leadership as "positional," or "official," is outmoded. Leadership is a dynamic, interactive function that cuts across the organizations in which people work with youth, in fluid and responsive relations. Similarly, leadership takes on an institutional, as opposed to a managerial, perspective. With these themes, schools appear as social creations, each reflecting a unique history and context in which differences in character are more important than are similarities in physical appearance. As such, schools appear less circumscribed, less controllable, more multipurposed than "managed" organizations. They serve as arenas where struggles over basic values permeate even the minor decisions of daily life.

Given the topic and scope of the forum, the absence of any sustained discussion of "metropolitanism" as a strategy for assuring students' success was noteworthy. There was little reporting of research, little analysis of legal opinions that led to the creation of metropolitan programs in a number of urban areas, and little advocacy of initiatives that would promote metropolitanism. The absence of such discussion is somewhat difficult to interpret, given the diversity of people at the forum. Was it that desegregation, as a basis for looking at the relationships among urban and suburban schools, has moved off the public agenda? Was it that participants were unfamiliar with the research reporting the educational effectiveness of many such efforts? Was it the perceived costliness of administering metropolitan strategies, when there are no visible mergers or consolidations of offices? Or, was it that the social meaning and significance of social integration and of diversity have changed, straining the public policy debate and threatening to divide groups who seek to develop an agenda for promoting successful urban schooling?

This search for authenticity seems, at best, to be "emerging," not completed; thus, the chief policy dilem-

ma of our time. At a time when we need to be continuing the search for authenticity, basing it upon careful analysis of the local community context, we have a thrust for national solutions in assessment, teacher certification, and curriculum—all of which seem to reflect a basic distrust of school-based urban educational leadership. In some sense, the forum served to counterbalance this trend. It was a celebration of interest and competency, an expression of community, that served to bring members of the national urban community together to strengthen their vision of successful urban schooling and to reconfirm their commitment to an alliance of purpose.

THEME ONE: PROMOTING INTEGRATED DECENTRALIZATION

Much of the continuing discussion about school reform centers on the question of whether change is initiated at “the top” or at “the bottom.” Several speakers noted that much of what has happened to date in school reform represents only a “first phase” tinkering with the traditional system that validates the views of neither camp. Neither the “top” nor the “bottom” should be too eager to take credit for what has been initiated. Adding more graduation credits, more school days, and even more pay represents no more than marginal adjustments to a system that requires more basic changes, they insisted. Their recommendation: to look beyond the “top down bottom up” configuration toward a new concept that one participant called “integrated decentralization.” Such a perspective might move us beyond the first phase reforms that fall within the traditional definition of schooling.

At the center of the discussion is the reformulation of an old belief system generated by the scientific management school of thought, which stressed the need for external experts to supervise the work of “unknowing workers.” Such a system defined an authority relationship between “higher managers” and “lower workers.” The essence of this system was enforced compliance. Policy makers at the center were assumed to be all-knowing; middle managers were assumed to be informed supervisors; and “workers” were assumed to be willing, somewhat dumb, unimaginative, compliant

subordinates. To change this “top down” belief system, both the top officers and the subordinates need opportunities to reorient their belief systems about what is “good authority” and learn how to construct more autonomous schools: to create self-governing units. This movement is referred to as “site-based management,” with an emphasis upon “management.” An alternative is to think about school councils more as communities; that is as meetings of stakeholders, who work out competing notions of what the school ought to become. The notion of building a well-managed school is different from forming a well-governed school.

Schools are not completely self-governing. State legislatures, judges, mayors, aspiring board members, national unions, retired admirals, all want to influence what happens in schools—usually without bothering to go to the school site council meeting. Central leadership, paradoxically, is needed to protect the sense of autonomy that might be generated at the school site.

Central leadership and support are necessary ingredients of school-site leadership. Central leaders need to create policy initiatives for the larger arena that share a common agenda with the operational programs at the local school level. The discussion needs to shift from a “top down, bottom up” dichotomous way of thinking to a new way of thinking: a focus on the middle, the linking. This arena of interaction, in which school-based program advocates and policy designers meet, offers the best opportunity to support the emergence of school leaders who can redefine the curriculum and instruction that youngsters actually experience as their daily life in schools.

Integrated decentralization calls for the strengthening of school communities. The need is to move away from fragmented interest groups that meet only at the “central” level to present and resolve their conflicting notions of what makes “good” schools, and toward school councils, where various constituencies of the school can engage in problem-solving encounters. In the context of governance, the main role of central policy should be to guide and support the debate.

Some of the discussion at the forum focused on the difference between guiding the processes of governance and guiding the content of school-site governance. To sharpen the question regarding the function of policy as a guide in this respect, some speakers contrasted what they believed to be the difference between the New York strategy, in which the focus is the *process* of local school governance, and the California strategy, in which there has been defined a broad set of indicators of success, some of which must be locally defined—in other words, a preferred *content* for school councils.

In large part, the question is "to what degree does the central authority shape the agenda of the local school council?" Should the school-site council be entirely free to set its own agenda? What if the council focuses on decorum in the cafeteria or security on the playground, and not on the quality of math instruction? Should the central authority guide the council towards reflection on curriculum and instruction? Some speakers thought that the New York strategy, in moving away from its compliance orientation of the past, had attempted to guide the process of local school governance, but not the content of the agenda. The guidelines had not started with some broad outline of the "good" curriculum and sense of instruction in order to shape the council's debate. Referring the council to current standardized test scores with a demand for improvement seemed to serve as an implied endorsement of the status quo in terms of school design and basic processes. The perception was that the California strategy, on the other hand, had both defined a broad set of indicators of success and had sketched out a sense of "what it means to know" or to be a student in the classrooms of the school. Such definitions were intended to guide the school councils in their agenda setting: to steer them away from cafeteria decorum to math knowledge.

In constructing a new urban agenda, the conversation might well continue to focus on a set of key questions raised at the forum.

1. How can central authority support shifts in resource allocations to facilitate integrated decentralization?
2. What influence or guidelines should be developed to promote meaningful educational autonomy?
3. What responsibilities do central authorities share for local school success?
4. How can central authorities shift from a compliance orientation to a support, problem solving, design orientation in their relations with local school councils?

THEME TWO: EXPANDING ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

As a result of the 1918 report of the Committee on the Reorganization of Secondary Schools, which outlined the Seven Cardinal Principles as a framework for the curriculum and finished its report with a discussion of students and their "probable destinies," public schools in America have tended to construct various "tracks" to define the educational careers of students in schools. Traditionally, those broad tracks and the probable destinies they led to were college preparatory, vocational, and general education. Having legally moved away from "tracks" as official definitions of knowledge, the schools veered close to the other extreme: a nondefined program of options that some referred to as a "shopping mall," "filling-station," or "open-access-cable-television" view of curriculum.

In spite of the school's official retreat from formal "tracking," it does continue systematically to create differentiated student paths through the curriculum. In the process of structuring the curriculum with student differences in mind, the school defines knowledge in differential terms and provides students with differential access to knowledge. Knowing math, for example, is clearly not the same for all students. Some students get "sent" along the path through the remedial math quagmire, a path that is barely navigable for many students who must pass competency tests in math to graduate. The path through algebra is treacherous for far too many students, even for those who are expected to succeed. At the same time, the path that leads from course to course through calculus reflects smooth sailing and sunny skies for the few students who get sent along this bright narrow path.

Participants were genuinely concerned about urban students' differential access to knowledge. Largely as a result of federal policy regarding compensatory and remedial programs, students' access to knowledge seems driven more by fiscal accounting procedures than by defensible definitions of what students need to know to be productive citizens in our information age. The curriculum path many students experience has been defined in minimalist, deficit terms, using "dumbed-down" definitions of knowledge, restricted content, and lowered standards. In talking about his work with selected elementary schools, Henry Levin articulated a very different ethos: quite literally, an *accelerated* curriculum. His analogy to an undernourished youth was telling:

"Would you," he asked, "continue an undernourished youth on a starvation diet or put the youngster on a more reasonable diet?"

The social efficiency notion of aligning the educational paths of students with presumed careers and requirements of specific vocations—their probable destinies—seems particularly unsuited for a society in which adult work itself is being radically redefined. Adult work as it is observed today is not likely to be the same when students graduate. Ways of working that were productive prior to the decline of manual labor and the demise of linear industrial processes are no longer predominant. Instead of seeing work as primarily physical, we note the intellectual, active, collaborative nature of much current adult work. A modern sense of adult occupations seems strangely out of sync with "student work," when juxtaposed with the daily school life of most urban youngsters. The path that leads from what youngsters are asked to know and to do in their classroom to what adults are asked to know in their productive lives becomes even less sure. School work and adult work can be aligned in an occupational sense, but perhaps not in a vocational, job specific sense.

As was evident in most comments, the concern is not simply for greater access to existing courses. The courses currently offered in many urban schools represent a restricted, low-level, dysfunctional definition of knowledge. Greater access to knowledge, therefore, will require a reconsideration of course content, not simply of the administrative procedures that control course selection or the legal procedures that define program sequences.

Of particular concern to many participants was the traditional notion that vocational subjects "teach youth to use their hands," as if physical work could not or should not be intellectualized. Viewing these courses as devoid of intellectual content denies students an important opportunity to learn and practice thinking skills as they solve problems. Traditional vocational courses too often ignore the development of cognitive skills, further limiting students' access to knowledge. As noted elsewhere, attending to the thinking that should occur in the context of these courses entails more careful and explicit attention to the ways language(s) is (are) used to create meaning.

Given this set of concerns, the conversation about access to knowledge for students in urban settings might continue to focus on several key questions.

1. What actual curriculum paths do most urban youth travel through their school careers, and how do we justify them in the context of adult work?

2. What should the path(s) from preschool to adulthood look like in relation to the organized instructional and educational program of the schools?

3. How could community "helpers" actively provide students greater access to knowledge, e.g., associations of engineers with Saturday labs, museums with afternoon science, etc.?

THEME THREE: ACTIVATING LEARNING

At least since the 1890s when Charles Eliot made his observations of education in Germany and compared it with student life at Harvard, public policy has considered the allocation of student time: How much of one's life should be devoted to compulsory education? How much school time should be spent in each area of study? A parallel question, of course, is, "How do students spend their time in school?" In other words, what is the nature of student work? What does it mean to a student to do "schooling?"

As the speakers noted, the American system is by tradition age-graded: K-grade 12 with a year spent at each grade level. Empirical evidence clearly documents that many students are "spending" much more time in their efforts to earn a high school diploma. Speakers assumed that "how much" time students spend in school and "how they spend" their time in school is related: students need more time in school to succeed, because they spend their time in inactive, passive roles that fail to engage their interest, imagination, or energy.

In discussing what students "should look like" when they graduate, speakers moved beyond the more traditional basic skills, academic content indicators of success and talked about such qualities as the ability to demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit, a willingness to take responsibility, the ability to sense and shape problems, the ability to work in a cooperative environment, and similar competencies that describe characteristics of adult work in complex settings. Clearly, said many speakers, students need to engage in "school work" in settings and with tasks that encourage the learning of these adult competencies. In short, students should engage in active learning.

Several speakers relied upon the sports team and coaching analogy to describe their image of the successful classroom. Sports teams rely upon a high level of individual, somewhat specialized competencies and a concerted and well practiced group effort that coordinates individual contributions. Students in most regular classrooms of urban schools each attempt to do the same thing and to do it in isolation, only in the presence of others. A number of speakers referred to Lauren Resnick's analytical comparison of "school work" and "adult work," in which she forcefully presents these differences.

Mass education with its traditional value on efficiency is organized in such a way as to encourage simple tasks. In this sense school work has been likened to the simplistic tasks of the assembly line that produces "acceptable," but not high quality products for a mass market. The Japanese manufacturers, noted one speaker, have made different assumptions about the consumer: educated consumers want high quality, distinctive products. This same sense of high quality niches within the larger market is driving students and their parents to question the quality of what their taxes buy for students: what experiences do students get in classes. More and more, parents want academically engaged students. The most immediate indicator of academic engagement is "their work," in class and at home.

Teachers largely control classroom processes. In order to move more towards active learning, participants noted that several changes were necessary — not only in the classrooms themselves, but in other areas, such as physical facilities, equipment, materials, and time schedules. These framing elements are powerful and shape the decisions that teachers can make about what goes on in classrooms.

Some speakers advocated system-wide changes that support teacher-directed mini-schools, alternative schools, schools-within-schools, or houses so that teachers may more directly engage in institutional or organizational decisions that impinge upon instructional decisions for classes. Given more freedom to allocate their instructional time within scheduled blocks of time, greater flexibility in use of facilities, and more discretion over assignment of personnel, teachers might design more active learning for a greater number of students.

Finally, some speakers noted that the teacher observation and evaluation system should be "energized" as one of the primary arenas in which discussions about active learning take place. In the process, what students are actually doing in classes needs a sharper focus. Similarly, in place of or in addition to the individualistic, private nature of most teacher observation and evalua-

tion systems, schools need to find ways for teaching teams to share observation information in group formats and to engage in discussions of interpretation: what do students do in our classes and of what value is it? Supervisory and evaluation systems need to be redesigned to support collegial concern for students' academic or intellectual engagement.

Questions that might support NUA's concern for fostering more active student learning are noted below.

1. What types of in-service teacher training and organizational support do systems need to provide in order to encourage more active learning strategies in the classrooms?
2. How can materials acquisition procedures be modified to support teacher access to those materials that might engender cooperative, team learning?
3. In what ways do organizational structures constrain decisions to engage students in more active learning?
4. What incentives, fiscal or social, are provided to encourage and/or reward those professional who design more active learning encounters for students?

THEME FOUR: RECONSTRUCTING FUNCTIONAL COMMUNITIES

Schools in local communities have often been criticized for perpetuating social inequities by replicating the existing social structure. Traditionally, students who come from rich homes or come to school with reputations as "good kids" get preferential treatment, while children from "bad families" get a different school experience. To George Count's challenging question, dare the schools build a new social order, the accepted response has ordinarily been a slightly equivocal "No."

The dysfunctions observed in and ascribed to community life have been viewed primarily in the context of small town and/or rural life. More recently, scholars have begun to pay more attention to the social consequences of the lack of community in urban settings. Coleman's analysis of school success in relation to school context, for example, led him to conclude that

the success associated with non-public, parochial schools results largely from the patterns of intergenerational interaction that exists among the institutions surrounding youth; that is, education is more successful when there is a continuity of expectations among people from the church, school, family, and college. This inter-institutional social structure is what Francis A.J. Ianni has referred to as a "social charter" that communicates both a sense of caring and a sense of direction or path for growth to youth in the environment.

The overall emphasis was captured in the expression "building on strengths." Instead of thinking about what kids cannot do, the school should focus on what they can do, or would do with a little help. The community the student experiences should be accepted as the core of the school experience, and it is from this core that his or her broader community of meaning should be developed.

Concerns were expressed about three patterns of relationships within a functional community. First was what might be called the horizontal dimension: the linking of services across the community to support the school and family at one point in time, e.g., helping a seven year old child's family get adequate health care within the community. The second was the vertical dimension: linking institutions from one stage, level, or context to another. This second concern focused on the student's educational career. It focused on transition points in the student's movement through the educational school system, for example, the move from an early childhood program into third grade, the move into middle school, the choice of a high school, or movement into college and/or work. Finally, a third concern: about the nature of the linkages or relationships between governance systems within the school and those within organizations in the larger community. How, one might ask, does the site-based management council of the school relate to the community's health care facility?

With respect to the horizontal dimension, participants noted that urban family life, like family life in other settings, has undergone significant changes in the past two decades. In addition to general social change, urban centers have experienced an exceptionally high influx of immigrants. These new families often do not know how to "use" the social organizations in their new setting; thus, family education takes on a special meaning. During the time of great change, governmental responses to social changes and needs have neither been comprehensive nor prevalent. The levels of pre-natal health services, early childhood support services, and family oriented education that are necessary for a reasonable quality of life, for example, have not emerged in

spite of observations and research that indicate such an investment could be justified in cost-benefit terms. At present, social policy in support of family life seems to reflect a very mixed response, surely not a persistent, predominant strategy of support.

In addition to the absence of some needed services, there is still an absence of coordination among those social agencies and organizations that do exist, and do provide family-oriented services. Many urban programs have been designed to foster collaboration, joint ventures, the sharing of expertise, and/or linking of resources. Few of these have been vested in schools and in the administrative system of schools—despite the strategic location of these institutions in the community. The issue seems to be one of authority and governance. Each social institution continues to have its separate governing board, its own separate budget process, and its own personnel system. As a result, at the school site no one—neither the principal nor the school council—seems to know how to decide who is "first among equals" or with what authority they speak. Thus, from a family perspective the services remain fragmented and difficult to access.

In his analysis of the governance of urban services, Viteritti notes that "most discourse on the subject of school governance has focused more on the politics of accountability than on the management of services ... the emphasis on conflict and competition overshadowed the need for urban dwellers to form a viable service community." Participants underscored his notion of a service community and the requirement that governance and cooperation, rather than conflict and adversarial relations, receive concerted effort.

James Comer's work in New Haven has directly addressed the conflict between school and community and provides one of the most notable examples of a functional service community. His school-based mental health team brings together the school's instructional leaders, its child support staff, its administrative officers, and the larger community's health agency personnel in a collaborative setting where proactive, preventive solutions are sought for individual youngsters and for the school as a social organization. Of central importance is the relation of this mental health team to the school's council, where parents join as peers to address school-wide concerns and to plan events that support families in the community.

Another notable exception to the prevailing pattern of governance is the Cities in Schools program. In this instance, direct coordination of services is evident, but the significance for school-site governance is less clear than in the Comer model.

Regarding the vertical dimension of the functional community, most of the discussion focused on two problematic areas: the transition in youths' lives that parallel the middle/intermediate school years and, later, the transition into the adult world following secondary school. Most people agreed that the tension between those values and practices expressed in the middle school model and those associated with the junior high school indeed reflected a significant educational problem and not simply a matter of organization or efficient use of space. Life in an urban middle school is often very different from life in a junior high school. The junior high school practice of organizing as departments, rather than teaching teams, tends to fragment the learning experience and to make the formation of a community of support more difficult. Speakers noted that middle schools often maintain an "elementary" school perspective and/or community orientation. This transition period in the lives of urban youth and its significance for a functional service community has received only belated and limited attention from policy makers.

The second aspect of the vertical dimension of functional communities reflected an occupational, not vocational, concern; that is, the relation between school work and out of school adult work. The current approach seems to provide job-training and/or work experience that is compatible with the social efficiency model; that is, aligning schooling with the demands of specific work settings. What is less evident is the degree to which schools have succeeded in "intellectualizing" work; that is, giving work a social, occupational, and educational meaning. It is this effort that relates individual effort to a sense of community and does so in educational terms.

Discussants noted, for example, the historical contributions of the land-grant universities to intellectualizing the work of farmers, which included dissemination of agricultural research through a series of demonstration farms and cooperative extension agents in local communities. One major dimension of this effort was the 4-H Club, which through individual projects served to connect student work to adult work and to the university. Project reports served as "authentic" assessment devices that linked "school lessons" and "real work" performed in the adult occupations outside school. The youth learned how "to do farming" and how "to do college" through participation in the federally-funded, university-based program. Some speakers called for the development of a similar "urban occupations" thrust on the part of land-grant universities and private enterprises in specific occupational areas, such as law, health, transportation, tourism, financial services, etc. Such an educational agenda might serve to

invigorate and strengthen partnerships among schools, business and institutions of higher education.

Finally, there was concern about how the school goes about relating to the larger community, including the question as to who sets the agenda. Participants noted that schools most often expect the community to come to the school and to work on the school's self-defined agenda — that is, to work on what the school wants done. When the school curriculum is undergoing change, the family should be considered participants in the "staff development" program, helping to develop and understand the changes. There also needs to be a dialogue about the meaning of the change, and education needs to help the community understand its vocabulary. Families, for example, should feel comfortable in discussing what the school means when teachers talk about "higher order skills," about using "manipulatives" in math, or in discussing any of the other activities that acquire specialized terms.

Speakers noted that schooling is only part of the priority agenda for most urban families. Such families are often more powerfully related to their church than they are to health providers, to schools, to firefighters, or to the police. The church is the nexus of more sustained, meaningful associations. As one person noted, "Everybody goes to church; some go to college." Going to church is a voluntary act, very much unlike being summoned to school for a negative report or being solicited to work on someone else's project. If schools are to work with the families and the local community in new and significant ways, speakers said, they must find new ways of working with the local urban churches.

Several speakers suggested that "schooling" might not be effective everywhere as a unifying agenda for urban communities. To many people, schooling seems to be less problematic than other social services, especially health. One way to deal with this might be to have the school work with community leaders to improve health education and the health services provided by other community agencies and institutions. In such instances, the school would join as a partner in planning community improvement, and school and community leaders could learn from one another. Such an effort might lead to a new sense of community accountability. Instead of the school simply being accountable for its own performance to the community, the community as a whole—including the school—would be accountable to itself for its effectiveness in providing health services.

Useful questions for the continued conversation among people interested in building a new urban agenda might include the following questions.

1. In what ways can schools more effectively build on the strengths youngsters demonstrate in their lives?

2. What roles can school personnel play as partners in improving community health, especially for young children and pregnant women?

3. What can schools do to construct community councils where cooperative leadership of social services in support of youth is the primary agenda?

4. How can the community of support services sustain youth through their transitions in their educational careers?

THEME FIVE: STRENGTHENING TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Everyone recognizes that professionals engage in life long learning. As professionals we even acknowledge that other members of the school staff not only learn informally but also engage in organized instruction: secretaries go to classes to learn about word processing, school aides go to classes to learn about safety and security, custodians take courses to learn about dangerous substances. Seldom do schools organize an inclusive, problem-focused staff development program for people at an individual school.

As educators, our modes of learning tend to be of three types or functions:

- system-wide activities that are usually either of a policy nature (e.g., a new regulation), a crisis (e.g., the ramifications of HIV / AIDS), or topical (e.g., school reform, cognitive skills)
- school based group activities, such as faculty meetings or grade level meetings; and
- individual programs such as college-based degree programs or in-service courses.

In terms of resources spent, meaning both time and money, by tradition we have tended to go somewhere else and to study with someone else, instead of studying at our school or among ourselves. Seldom do we work at school with some competent people we especially selected because they can contribute to the problems or topics we want to discuss. Even less often do teams study the school as a whole. There is still a tendency to

invest in isolated individuals instead of teams; that is, we pay individuals for their self-determined movement on a degree-oriented salary schedule, but we put little money into team events such as school retreats, team attendance at conferences or forums, multiple-day on-site seminars, or into enduring, cooperative ventures involving several schools.

In addition to various specific suggestions about how to make staff development programs more team oriented, there was a general concern that there be "more school time for planning." Few citizens seem to realize how work loads and schedules squeeze the time available for productive interaction focused on a public agenda for school improvement. Providing more time for planning, of course, raises the crucial question of trade-offs: the more money that is allocated to salaries, for example, the less money there will be to pay for "extra duties" such as school planning time. Similarly, the more teachers there are so that there will be smaller classes, the less money there will be to hire substitutes or make other arrangements that could make teacher planning time available. All of which is to say, public policy and decision makers will be under increased pressure to find or redirect resources needed for new patterns of collaborative planning.

In addition to finding resources, urban systems will need to review the "mental model" that serves as the rationale for organizing staff development. Traditional programs reflect a classical market model, with the assumption that a community is formed as the result of individual exchanges. Similarly, these traditional models often incorporate an industrial view of work, in which a supervisor, functioning as a compliance officer, tells subordinate workers what to do. A model based on a community perspective, on the other hand, assumes that individuals are active, creative, and have competing aspirations about their common good. Staff development based on traditional economic and industrial models are inappropriate to contemporary needs and situations. Individuals in the school community have images of a different school and are willing to work cooperatively to create a sense of community among themselves. But, creating a community from competing interests is hard work.

The implications for developing site-based educational leadership seem clear. There are no universally effective practices that can be "installed" in one school after another by simple majority vote. There is no way to "import" competencies by hiring a few new teachers every so often; mature professionals must be helped to grow. Similarly, school communities cannot be developed by competent individuals working in isolation; a

community is more than a loose collection of individuals wandering around in the same locale.

Local schools are socially-embedded cultural institutions, reflecting historical traditions and locally-generated aspirations. Different stakeholders have different interests that need to be articulated, carefully considered, and connected to other interests and current beliefs. School leaders need to know how to look at school cultures, to look beyond the "bits and pieces" and the "mechanical installation" approaches that have been too prevalent in previous school improvement programs. Furthermore, school leaders need to be able to "read" the school as a dynamic institution, instead of seeing it as a prescribed bureau or an official organization. School leaders need an informed value perspective that permits them to comprehend the differences in school character, which can in turn be read as the difference between two sets of social values: one, reflected in technical schools, based on notions of social efficiency; the other, reflected in constructivist schools, based upon more democratic notions of autonomy and inquiry. School teams need opportunities to learn and practice social skills involved in reformulating schools as collaborative communities.

NUA might promote its agenda in this area by addressing the following questions.

1. How do current working relationships between central offices and local school people undermine and/or support the development of teams?
2. How can personnel evaluations systems be re-oriented so as to engage teams both as targets and as agents of evaluation?
3. How should staff development programs and activities be re-aligned to support team development, rather than job specialties?
4. How can well-functioning teams, in terms of work and governance, support fledgling teams in other systems?

THEME SIX: COLLABORATING FOR INQUIRY

Collaboration creates knowledge. As a result of working together, colleagues generate new ideas about what ought to be and about how aspirations might be realized. For the profession, it is important to find ways to articulate this knowledge and to share it with others.

Research is the process of generating and presenting knowledge or engaging in inquiry. Staff development programs should be inquiry based. Instead of being locked into a passive system in which local professionals receive the products of other people's inquiry, newer programs should help to engage local professionals in the process of research itself. Inquiry and autonomy, or self-governance, are closely related. Local professionals who generate knowledge about their own performance can make more informed decisions. Thus, staff development might be thought of more constructively as the development of leadership competencies in school improvement, both in terms of governance skills and instructional skills.

What follows is an analysis of some existing models for improving school leadership skills and a recommendation regarding a preferred model.

The University Council of Educational Administration, as was noted in the forum's discussions, classifies preparation programs in terms of how they relate "theory and practice." The UCEA refers to four basic models.

1. The first model is practitioner-based. Individuals are separated into groups, rather than teams. Instructors are experienced and/or retired educators. The teaching focuses on "the one best way" or "how I handled that problem." Much learning is assumed to be on-the-job. Little, if any, attempt is made to develop critical analysis skills, a broader institutional perspective, or a collaborative team.
2. The second model is the academic model, which begins largely with the social science disciplines and attempts to apply their analytic and theoretical perspectives to the practice of school leadership, focusing largely on administrators in the schools. Critics claim that this model is too narrow and "theoretical."
3. The third model is clinical in nature. Designed to bridge the gulf between the practitioners and the theoreticians, the model provides an apprenticeship, where a senior mentor helps the neophyte interpret the context and the problems at a specific site. The focus remains on

the individual, not the team, and largely on the "problem at hand." The model is considered more appropriate for less experienced professionals than for mature ones, although the interaction can represent reciprocal learning.

4. The fourth standard model is referred to as the "reflective practitioner." The model reflects the work of Donald Schön at MIT. It is most evident in principals' centers and superintendents' roundtables, in which administrators with the same job title meet. The focus is upon the interpretation of professional experience. Expertise is assumed to be less technical, less rationally calculated, and more intuitive, a blend of technical knowledge and experience that can be made explicit only after careful reflection.

A functional professional development program in an urban center might have access to all four models: practitioner, academic, clinical, and reflective practitioner. The models clearly exist within every urban center. What is needed, our discussions suggested, is a fifth model, already emerging in urban centers: the integrated model. Before describing this fifth model, we note some programs typically offered within each of the traditional models to provide a context.

PRACTITIONER MODEL: EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

Training Centers: Programs, often offered by or in conjunction with business partners, emphasize what are called "generic skills." Lectures and role playing simulations are often included. Usually the school is not treated as a special type of organization. Teams are seldom involved.

Leadership Academics: Professional associations select respected members to present intensive workshops on specific topics. The venue is often a resort. Frequently based on "administrative tasks" or some sense of "needs." Participation is usually limited to individuals with similar jobs, not teams.

Mentorships/Internships: Emphasizes on-the-job training and face-to-face educational strategies. Quality varies substantially because of labor intensive nature of approach. Often relies upon retired administrators serving as adjunct professors. While often based on "administrative tasks" framework, no organized set of activities is required for successful completion, as would be true in, for example, medicine. Usually emphasizes role of "field supervisor." No team focus.

ACADEMIC MODEL: EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

University Degree Programs: Programs are designed to provide knowledge and analytic skills, usually in specific areas of expertise, e.g., personnel administration, budgeting, instructional supervision. Focus on critical thinking skills manifested in written exams, papers of synthesis, and dissertations. Individuals seek out the programs. Concern for collaboration and team effort is largely absent.

CLINICAL MODEL: EXEMPLARY PROGRAM

Assessment Centers: Programs are designed to predict who has the potential to be an effective leader. Claims rest on an array of skills identified by research. Heavy focus is on generic skills, with some recognition of specific problems of schools. Requires validated trainers. Usually offered on a non-school site. Each candidate receives a report on observed skills.

REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER: EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS

Principal Centers: Predicated on notion that principals themselves should direct their own life-long learning. Aims to promote constructive dialogue between university and administrators. Emphasizes clarification of thinking through articulation before peers, leading to improved practice. Values mutual support and trust. Generally does not directly address official priorities. Does not provide for school teams.

Collaborative Action Research: Usually school-site based, using a network of school leaders. Administrators and university personnel are involved as team members. Most often focuses on a specific instructional strategy. Research emphasizes qualitative procedures, including observations, interpretation of natural events, portfolios. Incorporates local program planning and decision-making based upon the participants' research.

The California School Leadership Academy (CSLA): By design, CSLA focuses only on instructional leadership. Based upon the premise that effective leaders use established processes, referred to as "instructional leverage points." Sixteen units require 105 hours of workshops for each of two years, then 105 hours developing a comprehensive school improvement project—an element that makes it more than practitioner training. Equal to 7 graduate courses. Activities are offered through regional centers. Each entering group is formed into an enduring, supportive cohort.

In the "integrated" model, incorporating elements of each of the other four, university faculty work with schools to generate research studies from which a formal model of schooling is developed. This model is then collaboratively developed with the local school staff. Their efforts are documented and disseminated. The school establishes for itself and others a formal training program that includes a presentation of the intellectual framework, seminars with key staff people, and visits to classrooms and councils at the demonstration school site. Often, other interested schools form a leadership team, including administrators, teachers, parents, and maybe students. This team arranges to assess the model and to develop a version for their own school with technical assistance and support from the staff of the university and local school system. Unlike earlier "installation" models where local schools were assumed to be passive recipients of externally designed solutions, this collaborative process offers the local team roles as active assessors, designers, and decision makers.

Representing this model are at least three current programs that offer professional development activities for school-based teams.

INTEGRATED MODEL: EXEMPLARY MODELS

School Site Demonstrations with a Theoretical/Research Model: Three major programs representing this model are Henry Levin's "Accelerated School," James C. Comer's "School Development Program," and Robert Slavin's "Success for All."

Levin's Accelerated School model is student performance driven. Its basic thesis is that all children can be "up to grade level by the end of 6th grade." Its main features include empowerment of teachers; substantial parental involvement; collaboration with businesses, senior citizens, and other community resources; and development of an enriched (as contrasted with a remedial) curriculum. The organizational approach is based upon three major principles: unity of purpose, school empowerment to redesign the structure and program, and building on strengths. Parental involvement includes attending to health, attendance, punctuality, home reading, discussion of school, and ensuring that independent assignments are addressed.

Comer's *School Development Program* is a child development/ school management model that emphasizes a mental health perspective, coupled with a system of governance that requires collaboration and cooperative effort. Comer's basic thesis is that "students who develop well intellectually, psychologically,

and socially in school can, in turn, function better in their families, their social networks, and their communities of interest." The model requires a system-level steering committee; a building-level council of interested parties; and separate working committees of the mental health team, including representatives of key agencies; of parents who develop a program of activities for students and for families; and an instructional committee composed of the professional staff. In essence, the committees are responsible for constructing a community of support in which successful education can take place. A complete training program exists to support school based teams and central support staff.

Slavin's *Success for All* model is a comprehensive early intervention program that emphasizes classroom-based strategies, which are referred to as "responsiveness to students' needs for corrective instruction." Students are not categorized and staff specialists generally work as tutors on a short-term intensive basis in a collegial relationship with the classroom teacher. During a 90 minute reading session, students are grouped according to performance levels. As a consequence of the difference in the assignment of staff, reading groups can be kept to about 15 students. Students receive reading assessments every eight weeks and a program facilitator works with teachers to design individual academic plans. A family support team provides assistance. School governance includes advisory and steering committees.

Because they focus on comprehensive change through school empowerment and collaborative efforts, these integrated centers probably offer the best long term chances of furthering a new urban agenda.

There are probably several other examples of the "integrated model" currently being developed among NUA school systems. Equally important, there are local schools in which teams are attempting to develop their own instructional models, sometimes without the assistance of other kinds of external resources that could relate their efforts to research and/or help them document their work so that it can be more readily shared with other school teams.

NUA could help identify such projects as part of an "inventory." Where such projects exist, these collaborative school site projects could function effectively as training centers for other school teams, with the supervisory staff serving as active team members along with their other partners.

In constructing a new urban agenda, the conversation might continue to focus on the following questions, which were raised at the NUA forum.

1. How can resources be re-allocated to invest in the development of school-site teams that can articulate a model of schooling?

2. How can local schools and universities in NUA collaborate to develop research-based, coherent models of schools that incorporate both governance systems and instructional strategies?

3. How can the alliance foster inter-city team collaboration about similar school models as a promising mechanism for school team development?

THEME SEVEN: REDEFINING KNOWLEDGE

A plethora of newly-legislated tests carries with it a set of beliefs about what it means "to know." Wisely, many teachers do indeed teach to the tests, under the assumption that assessment and instruction should be aligned, or else students are caught in a "gotcha" game. Aligning instruction to the tests, however, makes true sense only if the definition of "knowing" that is embedded in the test is defensible in broader social and curricular terms.

Speakers expressed several concerns about the need for careful attention to the curriculum. In most of these discussions, speakers referred to the school's curriculum as if it were limited to the "program of studies" — perhaps forgetting that school learning is broader than the teachers' sets of formal lessons. Other speakers used this broader notion of curriculum, some pointing out that while in school students learn basic lessons about such areas as the development of intentions or purpose, patterns of authority, social relations in a group context, and, indeed, learn the meaning of one's social "self." In this sense, speakers noted that urban schools, like other schools, teach a set of cultural beliefs that may be as powerful as, if not more powerful than, specific areas of content.

The conventional school curriculum, through its organization, presentation, and assessment, teaches students a basic social lesson. By linking eligibility to participate in an "enriched curriculum" to success in "minimum skills tests," the school tends to reinforce the notions of an inequitable, structured system. Students learn that there is a two-tier curriculum or world of

knowledge, in which there is a rich diet for some and a near-starvation diet for the rest.

By mandating tests in specific content areas, such as science and social studies, in addition to the more content-free "competency" tests, state policy makers have intruded deeper into the curriculum, bringing with them an official definition of what it means to know in the areas of content they have chosen to test. As speakers noted, teachers often use periodicals, supplemental materials, television, and other approaches to update and extend the content available in textbooks. Unlike outdated textbooks that can be modified through quality teaching, state-wide tests are less amenable to change. Indirectly, using standardized tests in these areas institutionalizes both a view of "knowledge" as a specific body of content and of "knowing" as a recalling of information. The tests emphasize a fragmented approach to knowledge at the same time as curriculum leaders are trying to come to terms, once again, with the integrated nature of knowledge and the need to deal with broad fields or areas of knowledge—as distinct from separate specialized disciplines.

In a variation on McLuhan's theme of the "medium" as the "message," speakers voiced concern about the message that is carried by the instructional "package" that students experience. The materials that adults rely upon and produce in their work are vastly different from the "tools" that students use in their work. In using these "tools" students learn a great deal about what the school thinks it means to "work." Newer technologies or ways of working, whether in social organizations such as cooperative work or through electronic technologies such as the video disc and the computer, need to be more accessible to urban youth. Part of what it means to learn about adulthood is to learn how adults use and create knowledge in the context of their occupations.

Addressing the need to find ways to reveal the connectedness as well as the separateness of individual disciplines and courses, speakers talked about "thematic learning." In some cases the organizational context was the single, self-contained classroom. In others, it could be a "house" within a school, or even an entire school. Some themes represent occupational areas, such as performing arts or entrepreneurial enterprises. Sometimes themes are expressed in metaphorical terms: our school is a publishing house, a botanical garden, a social policy institute. Other themes are more directly academic in nature, such as American studies, science and math. Whatever their specific orientation, however, the themes are used not to prepare or train student for specific vocations (the "social efficiency model"), but to organize

knowledge in broad integrated, accessible, cross-disciplinary areas that make sense to students.

The relationship between knowledge and one's own language received some attention. In the spirit of multi-culturalism, speakers noted that it is important that students whose predominant daily language is something other than "standard" English have the opportunity to experience their own language as a source of knowledge or as a tool used to interpret experience. The primary example focused on math: students should not think that they must step outside their own culture and language in order to "do math." Such an approach may help youngsters to understand that their own language is helpful not only at home or in the streets, but in "thinking" or in "real school work." This discussion reflected one dimension of the concern for authentic learning that was evident throughout the forum.

Since there were specific panels and study groups devoted to reading and math and science as special areas and since reports of those discussions are presented in the next section of this report, we will not attempt to summarize that work here.

Questions that might support NUA's effort to develop and sustain a new urban agenda are noted below.

1. In what ways is it useful for staff development teams to focus on the social learnings embedded in the school's curriculum?
2. How can special interests and competencies of people in local schools be built upon as "themes" to enrich the curriculum?
3. In building upon local themes, how can a system balance the occupational areas of the larger society and the special interests of individual sets of teachers?
4. In what ways can business partners support the effort to develop themes that extend learning into the larger community?
5. How can NUA nurture clusters of schools with similar themes?

THEME EIGHT: REVAMPING TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT

Current assessment needs to be changed in function, format, and content. Assessment is a process of informing the public about how well the schools are doing. If the assessment measures were more valid educationally, or more authentic, there would be less concern that "schools are test driven." The key word used by many participants was "authentic": measures and testing situations should be authentic, not artificially constructed experiences that are as much unlike life outside school as they are unlike good instruction.

The assessment of adult competencies most often involves judgment about one's work: the quality of the items one produces and the character of the work processes. Schools do not ordinarily like to focus official assessment efforts on products or performance; teachers, justifiably, are not judged directly or solely on the basis of their "products." In addition to avoiding a direct assessment of outcomes, most teacher assessment avoids a judgment regarding the quality of the teaching process. Teacher assessment is largely *pro forma* and ritualistic, except perhaps for beginning teachers. Perhaps as a result of our general reluctance to assess adult work in schools, we have taken a specialized, somewhat esoteric view of assessing student work as well—a view that largely avoids actual observation of student work. Instead of looking at student products or performance or trusting teacher judgments made directly in class as students are observed "working," we look at indicators or surrogates of student work: test scores. From an assessment perspective, what students produce in schools are test scores. Adults outside of school, on the other hand, produce law cases, medical health plans, newspapers, assembled cars—products that have social utility to other adults. Students' test scores have no social utility aside from the testing context. "Authentic" assessment processes, by contrast, represent an attempt to measure entities more akin to the products of adult work—that is, meaningful products that result from active learning and the application of knowledge.

Testing situations should themselves be educational experiences—for the students and for the test givers. Instead of being timed sessions of isolated work on somewhat meaningless problems, tests should require students to engage in the very best learning experience: a cooperative problem-solving situation from which students learn. The "products" of these assessment

"lessons" would provide the evidence of student competencies. Scientific experiments that have to be explained, drama that has to be produced, magazines that have to be published, visual art that has to be exhibited, and music that has to be performed are good examples of assessment lessons, where good teachers coach students to success.

Existing measures too often focus on "minimum knowledge." Structured so as to be statistically discriminating, many standardized tests fail to show youngsters "at their best." Normed tests, by definition, must create a set of failures: persons with scores below the norm. As the results are most often displayed, individual student growth over time, which should be the focus of schooling, gets lost in the cross-sectional testing of unmatched cohorts.

The general public, while demanding more test results, is largely unaware that the conventional test format makes undue demands upon teacher time and requires teachers to engage in restrictive lessons. One teacher noted, for example, that she spent an inordinate amount of time teaching youngsters to do "bubbling"—a lesson they needed to learn for testing purposes. In the process of teaching "bubbling," the teacher is also often teaching youngsters to guess about somebody else's knowledge: to be an inactive learner and to pronounce simplistic bits of information with great certainty.

Questions about assessment that might be useful in the continuing discussion among members of the alliance for more successful urban schools are noted below.

1. How can local schools make greater use of existing demonstrations of student competencies and products of learning—e.g., newspapers, dramatic productions, visual arts, portfolios—in their reports to the public?

2. What can be done to stimulate states to develop more "authentic" tests for students, especially in math and science where traditional tests may encourage the worst models of teaching?

3. What can NUA do to discover and make known local examples of "authentic" testing?

THEME NINE: SUSTAINING COSMETIC AND/OR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

School change and reform are very much on the public agenda, at least for now. Sustaining public support for change represents a high level of social leadership and a sophisticated understanding of political influence. When discussing change, participants talked about the differences between incremental, cosmetic changes that leave the traditional school and curriculum largely in place and the more substantial, systemic changes that represent a paradigmatic shift or reformulation of schooling—that is, a significant rethinking about the school as a social institution. Systemic school change requires sustained support in the political arena, because its prerequisite is creation of a coalition of supportive constituencies.

Most speakers agreed that school reform to date has mostly been cosmetic—a tidying up of the old school model. Schools have made some surface changes that make them more "attractive" to their various publics, but few urban systems have attempted to redesign schooling. One reason for this is because the broad-based coalitions represented at this forum have not been generated in most urban centers. Most public policy statements made by most elected federal officials and their appointees have emphasized *applying what we know from observing "effective" schools*, rather than *designing "successful" schools for urban areas*. "Tidying up" the old models costs considerably less—not just financially, but intellectually and politically also.

Making cosmetic changes will not generate successful schools. The dilemma, as noted by participants, is that some of the very cosmetic changes that are inadequate educationally need to be made in order to sustain public credibility, while the larger and much more important process of redesigning is going on. Support for more fundamental change must be built. Unless some of these visible cosmetic changes are undertaken in the short run, public trust is likely to erode further and make systemic change even more difficult in the long run.

For school people, the problem is getting people within the schools to attend to this double agenda without developing a cynical perspective on school leadership. Working on a double agenda requires a sophisticated understanding and commitment that goes much beyond "business as usual." Attending to the

double agenda requires a higher level of professionalism than teachers in urban schools have been accorded in the past. Providing school system and school site leadership necessary to address this double agenda will require a new level of political skills.

The choice between cosmetics now or systemic change later takes on a different sense of importance when stated in specific schools terms: shall we now change middle school math to algebra for all, or shall we wait until we have a more meaningful math program that redefines what it means to know math? Teaching algebra to all would at least encourage and enable more urban youth to think of themselves as competent students, capable of successfully completing college level work at a later date. At the same time, defining middle school math as algebra represents an outdated notion of what it means to know math as a way of thinking.

Reforming the curriculum discipline by discipline also poses other problems. Such a strategy fails to face the issues about the integration of fields of knowledge and the need to engage students in instructional processes that aid in synthesizing and applying knowledge in a problem-solving context.

To focus the discussion on the Alliance's agenda for urban schools, members might want to consider the following questions that emerged from the forum.

1. How can school systems organize to pursue the double agenda—cosmetic change and systemic change—and make this agenda clear to the public?
2. How can school-site leadership foster the coalitions necessary for systemic change?
3. How can NUA mobilize and nurture an array of educational partners who will advocate and support systemic change?

THEME TEN: ENERGIZING POLITICAL ADVOCATES

Throughout the discussions of the forum, speakers noted that education currently enjoys a "window of opportunity"—that is, a chance to mobilize support necessary to garner the resources required for urban school reform. In the past, educators have tended to talk as if school change were simply a matter of making informed professional decisions outside the larger political arena. Developing a new math program, for example, was seen primarily as a matter of getting funding for curriculum writers at the university and for some limited staff development at the school site. The need to mobilize the larger community in order to gain support both for creating new designs and for supporting the process by which teachers and parents learn to give life to the design in local schools has seldom been the focus of efforts at changing the schools. Participants at this forum, on the other hand, stressed the political nature of school change and, thus, the need to mobilize broad-based coalitions, community coalitions. As one speaker noted, the task is to get the larger community to "own the problem" and to see their role in the reform effort.

Mobilizing public support for school reform is difficult—in part, ironically, because the profession has worked so hard over time to persuade the public that "school decisions should be left to the professionals." Added to this sense that schools should be professionally governed is the public's traditional sense of what schooling is. Most adults believe in the traditional school they themselves experienced and it is this defining image that they carry in their memory. Those people who had "bad" school experiences tend to avoid involvement in school politics. At the same time, people who aspire to traditional notions of American success also tend to see the traditional school in a positive light, as the vehicle that will carry their children to success. Urban school advocates often want "the old school to work for my kids" instead of contemplating a new model, with all its risks, known and unknown, that it may entail.

Social leaders from the business sector have generally been supportive of school change and reform. Their efforts, however, have ranged from well-intentioned but ill-conceived "adoption" programs to the sponsorship of exceptional examples of cooperative ventures. Overall, however, the impact of business leaders has not been significant, if judged in terms of school reform. Most participants agreed that the most significant contribu-

tion of business leaders would come when these leaders used their influence to help change the basic logic of the public policy process.

Instead of using assessment results to ask, "What can we do to support local efforts to improve schooling?", policy makers have used these traditional test results to justify greater regulation of urban schools. As a result, both state departments of education and the central administrations of school systems have become "compliance officers" or regulatory agencies at the very time when they need to be supporting risk takers and to be stimulating new school designs. What urban education needs from the corporate community, therefore, is not simply engagement in policy making activities, but strong leadership in redefining the policy agenda—in moving policy from regulatory compliance to a focus on innovative design.

In his report, Levin referred to this needed shift in policy logic as a major dilemma facing school officers. Regulations embody solutions to previous problems. When problems change significantly, these old solutions and the regulations that enforce them can actually be dysfunctional. When old regulations are enforced upon new and different problems, "the harder people work at

the old solutions, the worse the problems become." Currently, however, policy makers are enforcing old practices on new problems—by stressing regulatory compliance and by measuring schools with old standardized tests.

Other options, such as those noted above in the discussions of the need to reconstruct functional communities and to support new models of staff development, offer new ways of working in a relationship that is not based on regulatory compliance.

Questions the alliance might want to pursue as it addresses the need to energize a political policy agenda are noted below.

1. How can the alliance work with committed business officers who participate in partnerships move into the policy arena to shift the logic from compliance to design?
2. What incentives can be built into the state monitoring systems to reward entrepreneurial school designers?
3. How can business and school leaders cooperate to provide a "protective social shield" around schools that dare creatively to subvert dysfunctional regulations?

EFFECTIVE URBAN AND METROPOLITAN SCHOOLING

A Transcript of

Summations by Study Group Leaders

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Donald M. Stewart, President, The College Board

P. Michael Timpane, President, Teachers College

You're all looking older and wiser this morning, as we move into the last half-day of this remarkable conference. We will have the reports of the study groups and then discussion of the study group reports. There are nine study groups, and there are nine reports. Each study group has something its spokesperson wants to tell us. I realize there are a couple of groups that feel they need a few minutes more of our time. On your behalf I yield them those two minutes in advance, as they say in Congress. So let us begin in roughly the order that they are listed in your program.

The Requirements for Building Communities for
Effective Change in Urban Schools

Denise Alston,

Children's Defense Fund

Mathematics and Science

Robert Moses,

Efficacy Institute, Inc. for Thomas Romberg,
University of Wisconsin, Madison

Reading Comprehension Revisited

Robert C. Calfee,

Stanford University

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Curriculum and Instruction

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Role of Assessment in Educational Outcomes

Stephen Ivens,

Touchstone Applied Science Associates, Inc.

for Sylvia Johnson,

Howard University

Improving Thinking Skills of Students

Barbara Z. Presseisen,

Research for Better Schools

Community Issues Related to Urban Reform

Francis A.J. Ianni,

Teachers College, Columbia University

Robert Witherspoon,

National Coalition of Chapter I/Title I Parents

The Role of Business and Foundations in School
Reform

Santee Ruffin,

National Association of Secondary

School Principals

The Role of Government in Building School
Communities

John Smith,

US House Committee on Education and Labor

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDING COMMUNITIES FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE IN URBAN SCHOOLS

Denise Alston

A system of collaboration can proceed only after the purpose of forming a collaborative effort has been determined and articulated. The purpose and resulting collaboration systems should be developed by the community members. The members include students, parents, residents, community officials, business leaders, school staff, and administrators. Some of the discussion that went into that recommendation touched on the fact that whether you're organizing for personal involvement primarily, for the coordination of social health services, for business and university partnerships, or for generating money, the process and the outcome may be different for each. So it is important to get a sense of why you really want to have a collaborative.

Next we talked about how the planning process should be structured to include some form of awareness campaign to highlight the importance of the school to the community. We think the community must be educated to declare that education is their responsibility and that the schools are the major vehicle for delivering education. But they are not the only vehicle. We spoke specifically about developing a wide-ranging public education campaign, or public awareness campaign, basically using the media. I've shared some of the successes the Children's Defense Fund has had in putting out the word about adolescent pregnancy prevention and issues around that. Something similar at the national level could be reinforced at the local level, not only to raise the issue of community responsibility for education, but also to give different people and organizations in the

community ideas about how they may be active and involved. The focus on process was deliberate.

Rather than a solution or a specific implementation model, we recognized that planning attitudes are more transportable than plans or the solution part of it. Let me say that again. We focused on the planning process, because we recognize that planning approaches are far more transportable than are solutions. We think that the urban audience might spend some time developing a variety of planning efforts that the different entities might share. One strength of the community planning and information-sharing process might be focused on problem-solving rather than trying to correct specific ills. Collaborative planning could focus on a positive effort rather than simply on a problem. One idea was that as we go around the room we should ask each other what can we do, or what each can do to contribute to the process, rather than asking what's wrong or what are the problems. This idea was generated by a woman who was working in this area and wanted to avoid the "if only" syndrome. That is to say, we could do that "if only" we had this or "if only" we had that, rather than trying to move beyond "if only" roadblocks to the idea of thinking about what indeed we can do, what capacities are here among us in a community.

Finally, we talked a lot about will and political will and how to get folks off the dime in order to do things. We recognize that simply talking about will and trying to get a "feel good" thing going is not going to be effective. Therefore, we talked about some systems of accountability. One step toward accountability would be for school systems to identify the practice of community involvement as an integral part of the role of superintendents, of principals, and of teachers. Communities could then hold school people accountable if that involvement did not come about.

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

Robert Moses

(Thomas Romberg had a previous engagement and was not available to present the report.)

What I want to do is read the bullets—there are six areas that we targeted—and then put them in context. The first bullet says "Efforts need to be made to challenge the cultural mindset about mathematics and science"; that is, we need to deal with the relationship between mathematics and the general culture in which it takes place. The second bullet says, "Teachers need to be seen as the key actors in bringing about reform"; that is, we need to focus on teachers. The third bullet says,

"Mathematical and scientific literacy should be the focus of the curriculum and methods of instruction."

We need to focus on concepts for all children, and ask what is the appropriate concept of mathematical literacy for our schools. Bullet number four says, "Tests must reflect the curriculum that is being taught." Number five says, "Students need to be given adequate instructional support". So number four focuses on the assessment question dealing with mathematics and science, and the fifth concern focuses on the students and the kinds of supports that they need to succeed. Bullet number six says, "Parents and others in the community need to be included in all reform efforts." There needs to be a focus on the larger school community within which this instruction takes place. Now I want to give a little context to those conclusions of our study group.

I want to read one paragraph from the introduction that Tom Romberg put together. "At present, there exists a number of models, materials, teacher training programs, and instructional strategies that have been shown to work in particular situations. Because of this, we believe that solutions are possible. What is important is that we find ways to make systemic and lasting changes. In fact, one of the problems educators must face is the problem of making immediate, if somewhat cosmetic, changes to improve existing practices, while at the same time working toward needed systemic changes that will take time to develop and put into place." And I would like to talk about that context, about that particular program in the context of the question of mathematical and scientific literacy.

I want to say just a word about what's involved in making systemic changes, because it seems to me that's a critical issue that faces people. One way of putting the issue is that there's a political decision to be made about middle-school mathematics. The issue about cosmetic versus systemic changes has to do with the question of whether or not middle-school mathematics right now should abandon the current curriculum and substitute, say, if nothing else, algebra. This is a political policy decision. One view says that the focus for middle-school mathematics should be learning the language of algebra so that when youngsters go to high school, they're ready to do college-prep math. In the light of the NCTM standards, simply substituting algebra for the existing math curriculums is seen by mathematicians as a cosmetic approach.

There is a deeper and more important change to be made in middle-school mathematics and instruction, which is coming down the pike in light of the NCTM report about goals and standards. What we know, however, is that it will take at least ten years for that systemic

change to be effective. Currently, there is no curriculum which is out and available to meet these standards. It will take at least five years to develop such curriculum and then another five years to disseminate and put it into place. In the meantime, there are tens of thousands of secondary school students who will be lost following through on the current practices in middle-school mathematics.

One of the things we said at the program is that, if we can't make the political decision about what should be taught in mathematics, at least we can acknowledge that there is a political decision to be made. At least we can put on the table that there's a discussion to be had about what the political decision is: the central issue is the content of middle-school mathematics. What we know is that it's a wasteland. We can't do anything worse than what's being done. It's the one place in the mathematics curriculum in which there's a lot of slack that can be taken up. That slack could be taken up on behalf of inner-city kids. While that may be a cosmetic change in terms of the overall view of where mathematics is going, it is not a cosmetic change in terms of the life chances of inner-city minority kids. There's a lot at stake. Deciding on middle-school math shouldn't be something that just gets brushed over. So that's an important issue that's before us.

The context around the teachers and the notion of making them the key people focuses on our realization that we've got to figure out a way to give teachers time within the school day, so that they can read and talk and discuss and become actively involved in this whole process of curriculum change. If we don't provide for teacher planning, the new curriculum is going to fail.

Regarding the context around the students and instructional support, one of the key issues concerns the question of language, and giving the children a chance to react to and interface the mathematics with their own language. This is raised by Latinos who are concerned about the use of Spanish so that their children are able to see that their language is also a vehicle for mathematics. It is also a question which affects black children, particularly with the use of what is called "black English." Some argue that schools should allow them to use that language to interface with hands-on activity, the informal activity, the informal activity that needs to precede the formal development of mathematics.

The assessment question is a critical question that was raised in a general form yesterday. If you are developing new curriculum, then you need new ways of assessing what is being taught. It really just has to be faced. It's got to be, again, a political decision about how we assess. With respect to the last issue, the in-

volvement of parents and community, I think that we have got to acknowledge that we are just now learning how to involve the larger community in these issues of schools. We've got to learn how to be organizers of the community while we are teachers and administrators in the schools.

READING COMPREHENSION REVISITED

Dorothy Salley Strickland and Robert C. Calfee

It strikes me that it might help to draw concerns or questions together across the various areas, so as to draw themes together during our question-and-answer period rather than trying to go back and revisit each of the reports. I have a feeling there will be quite a bit of commonality.

We had a very exciting and productive study group. We called our response "Issues, Nuggets, Puzzles, and Recommendations Regarding Reading Comprehension, Revisited." You can identify these things in terms of any of those categories. These are some global points I want to make first, and they're in no particular order. The first point has to do with connections. Connections between theory and practice is something that we felt is very important. Each informs the other. As we revisited comprehension, it became apparent that there is a need to connect research to practice and to span across time and across disciplines. Often people talk about new research without acknowledging the important work that has gone on before. Metacognition, for example, by many other names has been studied for many, many years. On the other side, sometimes traditionalists don't give credit to new information. Either approach, by ignoring the connections, causes us to lose momentum.

We said that urban students, low-performance students, should not be precluded from high-status activities such as literature-based curricula, long-term projects, strong social studies programs, and similar studies. Exclusion from knowledge is something we felt was very typical. We need to stop blaming students for what is more realistically the failure of the system. We need to move away from a deficit model. In literacy, as you know, that's again something very common. We need to drop the model of basic skills as it presently exists. We must move beyond an emphasis on low-level, isolated skills instruction that places students permanently on dead-end tracks. We move toward a triangular model of reform which includes curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

In terms of curriculum, one of the key points emphasized was that reading is linked to thinking. They

are inextricably interwoven. One cannot separate them. Also, reading and language arts are interwoven, and they should be integrated. The curriculum should be meaning-centered; thus, the students themselves need to be a part of the curriculum. We need to open the mental limits of classrooms and legitimize what students bring to the classroom and use it as content for study. Certainly, the students' prior experience and knowledge are the springboard from which we should operate.

In terms of instruction, we talked about achieving balances between direct and indirect instruction. Also, there was concern about our ability to keep flexible grouping patterns. The question is, what's the difference between direct and indirect instruction? Direct instruction tends to have the teacher as the focal point, exactly what I'm doing right now. This is a good example of direct instruction. In addition to the teacher being the focal point, the teacher is also the repository of information, doling it out to inactive students. Now it may not be in little isolated bits and pieces; nevertheless, the teacher is the sole source of knowledge. In indirect instruction, the teacher is still key, because the teacher frames the environment for what happens—shapes the environment so that certain things are more likely to happen—but much of the responsibility for what occurs is placed on the students as well as on the teacher. That's the primary mode of operation: making students actively responsible for learning. Those are the differences. We're moving toward more indirect teaching, with the former being dictated by needs of students. Rather than simply going through a curriculum mindlessly or a list of skills mindlessly, we are trying to engage students as active learners.

In terms of assessment, we wanted to stress authenticity. We need to assess real, functional, meaningful kinds of learning experiences and performance. We need writing assessments that really involve writing. We need to rely upon portfolios of students' work products and demonstrations. Obviously, evaluation should be as closely linked to instruction as possible and involve students in self-evaluation, evaluation of what they are doing. We agreed that a good alignment between curriculum, instruction, and assessment depends on competent teachers and useful strategies and tools.

We also agreed that incompetent teachers cannot make anything work. Good staff development is essential. Again, we went to our five-part model with staff development at the top, teachers and administrators at the bottom, working in a collegial mode of operation. Staff development should include in-class follow-up, to capture a commitment beyond attendance at training

sessions. It should be voluntary, involve support staff, be coherent, and provide continuity. We agreed that there are some really good examples, particularly now in literacy, of programs and practices that work. Grass-roots teacher networks are springing up all over the country. School districts need to support those teacher networks. There is also a re-emergence of the curriculum coordinator who, by the way, tends to be a real driving force in leadership and instruction. Much as we want to talk about the principal as the leader, there seems to be greater progress if the principal has this other individual who focuses on curriculum and helps to make all these connections. Peer coaching and classroom visitation among teachers are also useful. Staff development centers in school districts are another phenomenon. We also find incentives. They do not all have to be monitored incentives, such as pay for staying late or coming in an extra day. There ought to be other kinds of incentives.

Administrators give legitimacy to these efforts. They play a very important role. They should be knowledgeable. They should participate in staff development, learning from and with teachers. They need to help to nudge teachers along a bit. That's an important role that principals share. And they need to share their power in a collaborative trust.

We talked about materials. Again, they're only as good as the people who use them, although we need to always strive to get the best material. Materials need to be authentic and current. We need to reallocate resources. We've gotten into modes of dispensing money for certain kinds of fairly standard material. We're asking for a new variety of materials. That may mean some reallocation of funds and rethinking of how we spend money.

One real exciting thing that came up, that we didn't talk about as much as we need to, is rethinking technology. We need to learn from engaging materials that are not specifically designed for instruction, such as Nintendo. Those kinds of things seem to engage kids for hours. Why can't we bring that technology into the classroom?

Finally, two key points that kept surfacing over and over and over had to do with the interrelationships in the teaching/learning process. To improve student comprehension, we must shift our focus away from teacher as teller, away from the exclusive use of direct instruction. We want to keep some of it in there. Sometimes, just telling students is a good way to get it over with and get on. We need to develop the model of teacher as mentor or as a master of working with apprentices. That is, we must show the students what to

do as a master shows an apprentice the basics and the finer points of a craft. To develop master-apprentice relationships in the classroom, we must treat teachers as masters. We need to help them strengthen their skills and then allow them to practice their art or their craft without constantly looking over their shoulders as if they were the apprentices.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Henry Levin

I'm going to skip the order to be sure that Hank Levin can talk to us before he has to catch an airplane. So we'll move down to Curriculum and Instruction.

I'm really not a *prima donna*, but I have to leave. I have to get a plane from Kennedy to get home so that my wife doesn't kill me for being away for two days instead of just one day on a weekend. I live in a matriarchal family, my wife is Latino. We both celebrate the importance of our family life.

Well, as you can see, we were given a very narrow agenda: curriculum and instruction. We handled it accordingly. One of the good things in listening to the previous reports is there's a lot of reinforcement. There's a lot of very healthy overlap. Let me just go down quickly some of the major dimensions. We divided our work into four different aspects of curriculum and instruction. The first thing to understand is that this is going to be very general. We did not focus on a specific part of the curriculum, necessarily, and the applications will not only depend obviously upon specific levels and aspects of the curriculum but also the kinds of students that we're dealing with in those specific settings. Nevertheless, we felt that there were some general principles that we ought to be concerned with. Although our group is very diverse, coming from a wide variety of backgrounds in terms of practice and research, I think we were really able to converge on a set of principles that people felt comfortable with. We divided our work into four aspects—one being dilemmas, second being school and district practices, the third being capacity building, and the fourth being mechanics.

The dilemmas refer to the movements out there and the situations that make it difficult for us in local schools to really focus on our task. Specifically, most of us felt that from the beginning curriculum and instruction is to be very child-oriented, in order to get a clear picture of our goals. Those curriculum building activities must be done in conjunction with communities. We need to talk about the educational processes as a collab-

orative process among practitioners, parents, students, or clientele, with the help of universities and those we can work with on improving practices. If we look out there, however, we see the first major dilemma: we have a movement which at the moment appears to be moving inexorably toward national curriculum and national testing. We live in a situation of test-driven behavior on the part of schools and teachers, but also by parents, students, and the media. We felt that often the outcomes of that test-driven process are actually opposed to the needs of the urban child. Certainly, tests don't start with the urban child. There are problems with the test, with the nature of the test, with formats, with what we try to measure, with what we try to assess, with the comparisons among different jurisdictions, and on the fairly narrow dimensions measured.

The second dilemma is that we live in a world where there are a lot of federal-state-local mandates, rules, and regulations that emphasize procedural compliance rather than outcome. We feel that an appropriate approach to curriculum and instruction must begin with meaningful outcomes for the urban child as opposed to compliance with procedural mandates, rules, and regulations.

Considering these dilemmas generated an awful lot of discussion and discourse. We see these dilemmas as the backdrop that affects the way that we behave and that shape local schooling. There's going to be a tension between those centralizing trends and doing "schooling" the right way—or the right ways in different settings.

Given those dilemmas, though, we decided to go to the secondary school and district practices. We came up with a range of these that we thought we could agree on. They're fairly general but we thought we could apply any one of these principles to almost any area of curriculum and instruction. Perhaps the most important two were, first, building on the strengths of the child, his or her family, and community, and looking for the strengths and giftedness in each child and in all children. Second, building the experience, culture, and language of the child into curriculum and application. The child's background and experience should not be handled as an adjunct to the curriculum, as something interesting to be added on, but they should be integrated into the curriculum and applications.

Third, we saw a stress on language. All teachers are language teachers, whether they know it or not. Language falls across the curriculum. We need to emphasize language approaches that capitalize on specific strengths of our students. There is also the notion that came out in the reading group: critical literacy, using

language in all its forms to solve problems and to communicate.

Beyond these, we thought it was very important to emphasize thematic learning and the integration of teaching among different subject areas. This is at all levels, of course, including high school.

There should be a greater emphasis on learning by doing, to include the use of manipulatives, applications, and independent study in meaningful contexts. Not an artificial, but a meaningful context.

Problem-solving is appropriate throughout the curriculum at every level, just as we middle-class types do all kinds of problem-solving with our pre-school children. Furthermore, we're very tired of hearing that problem-solving is a higher-order thinking skill that should be limited to a few select students. Such a two-tier approach is simply a way of keeping many children down to doing practice type exercises so they never get to problem-solving. We feel that problem-solving at appropriate levels should permeate the curriculum.

There needs to be an emphasis on understanding. This may be a little controversial, given what's happening internationally, but we would prefer to see fewer topics covered in greater depth, than superficial coverage of many topics. And along with teaching for understanding, there needs to be an emphasis on pacing that is adequate to maintain interest and insure learning.

We would like to see a deeper concern for the affective conditions under which children learn and that reflect their own feelings. All learning depends upon the emotional state of the child and we feel that should be recognized. We need a greater understanding that the child's emotions about school connect to the child's self-esteem, self-concept, and willingness to engage.

We would like to see curriculum and instruction focus more on the student-as-teacher and get a better balance between the student-as-teacher and student as less active learner, because we learn as we teach. Most of us, for example, learned far more when we began to teach than we learned when we were sitting as learners listening to teachers. Everyone in our group thinks that we should give everyone that opportunity to teach, again throughout the educational experience. Peer tutoring and cooperative learning are just examples, very powerful examples, of those phenomena: opportunities to teach.

High-level content in all parts of the curriculum, and here we mean no dumbing-down, no creating reading experiences that capture the phonemes, even though they are very artificial experiences. Instead, we need to get children to have meaningful readings, readings that

just capture a more natural context. Then we need to focus on instruction with that understanding.

We endorse the integration of academic and applied curriculum. By the way, applied technology is the current word that's used for vocational education. We think that for all children these educational areas ought to be integrated so that there's an integration of the academic side and the so-called applied technology, in the old, more vocational side.

We believe schools should develop meaningful learning experiences as an alternative to disciplinary exercises. By discipline I don't mean academic disciplines. I mean really keeping kids in line. The focus of the school ought to be to solve the discipline problems by providing meaningful and engaging educational experiences. We strongly endorse the changes that view parents as a part of the solution rather than as the problem. That is a major attitudinal and behavioral shift in terms of how we work with parents.

Finally we were concerned with capacity building. We don't think that all schools are ready to do these things, that all teachers are. So what do we need to do? Well, the first thing, we need time, much more time for staff to plan and collaborate. Most schools and school systems don't allow time for planning. It's particularly bad at the primary level where teachers are expected to hit the ground running when they arrive at the school and to work until they leave the school without any time to collaborate, to contemplate, to plan, or to work with others. We have to build much more time into the school day for planning and for collaboration.

Second, we don't think that these features of a strong curriculum and successful teaching can come about unless we have collaborative models at the school level; that is, we need places where teachers and other staff are working together. The traditional model that says—look, I'm a special ed teacher or I'm a second grade teacher, or I'm a Chapter I—a model that virtually destroys any hope of getting a cohesive curriculum that focuses on the needs of all children in the school is in need of significant change. We need a model that recognizes that we have to work together with a synergy that permits us to benefit from each other's ideas. We have to support each other at the school site in order to address these needs.

The collaborative model of school is heavily inquiry-based. We would like to see all teachers, for example, have inquiry skills. With these research skills, school people would be able to work together to define clearly what the problem is, to get information, to look for alternatives, to select alternatives, to take responsi-

bility for implementation and to conduct evaluation. Of course, that sounds like the teachers are owning the *program*. Now we hear that a lot. We think that the staff has to own the *problem* as well.

The beginning of getting a collaborative model is to say, "It's our problem," and to ask, "What is our problem?" "How does it work?" "What is it that we're concerned with here?" And then to move forward, to internalize the solution all the way through implementation and evaluation, to see if the solution is working. So we need a collaborative model within the school and we need to develop the capacity to create that model school. Continuous staff development that is responsive to the needs of the school and, in a sense, to the empowerment of staff is required to address these needs through a collaborative process. We need something more than the kind of hit-and-miss staff development program we see so often where there's little continuity, where there's little relation to what is actually happening in the school and in the classroom.

We need support structures in the central office. We need to reach the point where the central office is no longer the problem but is in fact part of the solution. Central office people have to be out in the schools working on real problems as defined either jointly or by the school. We see the central office then, instead of getting involved in procedural compliance, as helping schools to address meaningful outcomes for their students.

We see a greater focus on the development of leadership roles and the capacity of leadership to work with these kinds of collaborative models. In other words, again, moving away from the policy compliance model of leadership to one where there is true leadership assistance working hands-on, working jointly to contribute to solving those problems, working on the logistics to support problem-solving processes and to get implementation.

We see that it's necessary, as part of capacity building, to remove these unproductive mandates and constraints that actually work in the opposite direction. Indeed, I think there was consensus that if there is any evaluation to be done, evaluation of schools ought to be done on the basis of what they're actually contributing, what is actually happening to their students and what they're contributing to the community. That's where the evaluation ought to be. The school periodically, perhaps annually, ought to be evaluating the central office staff in order to make sure that they are providing the support to get that bottom line, rather than the other way around.

Let me just finish by asking, how do we get from here to there? We addressed a whole number of mechanisms at each level. They include higher education. They include legislators, the state board of education, the department of education, and school boards. They include a whole number of actors who have got to, in a sense, change their tune, get their acts together, in order to make all this happen.

ROLE OF ASSESSMENT IN EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Stephen Ivens

Assessment is an issue others have touched upon. The reading panel said that they talked about assessment. We concur with their conclusions. We concur with what Bob Moses said about adjustment and mathematics. We agree with what Hank Levin said about assessment as being external program "drivers." Therein lies our report. Clearly, one can't talk about assessment out of context and we didn't. But, we did not focus just on assessment and reading or assessment and mathematics. We're glad the other panels did.

At the outset, I want to say that our panel was considerably weakened by the absence of George Madaus. For those who don't know George, in my opinion, he's the single best and most compassionate mind in the field of testing today. It's just simply unfortunate that he had a very ill mother and couldn't be with us. We were, as a panel, terribly weakened by that. Second, although we had the benefit of Sylvia Johnson's eight minutes of wisdom as a panel, and Don Stewart's eight minutes of wisdom on a panel, neither of them were able to join us in the study groups. So, I'm not sure in summarizing here the work of the panel and the study group whose work I'm summarizing. In part, I'm summarizing mine. The substance of our panel's remarks focused on our interpretation of the title, which is the role of assessment in educational outcomes. We did try to focus on the assessment of outcomes of student performance, for reporting to audiences that are external to the school, the community, and the classroom. So it's the public reporting of assessment data that we focused on. We tried to note that assessment involves a broad array of devices and instruments and procedures. In spite of that recognition our remarks quickly narrowed assessment into simply testing. And once it got on to testing, then the entire panorama of testing issues and concerns and problems seemed then to be fair game.

Needless to say, we were diverse. There's another word that could be used for "diverse," and that would be that we were "bizarre."

Because one member was from the College Board and happened to make some mention of the SAT, we as a panel were criticized because we did not offer any suggestions on how you can prepare students to do better on the SAT. Not that it's an inappropriate topic, but I'm not so sure it fits under the topic we were given. Now we do believe, though, that as educators we have to focus broadly on assessment, and assessment has to be more than tests. We have to recognize that assessment is both qualitative and quantitative, and for those who believe quantitative assessments are better than qualitative, they are wrong. And for those who believe qualitative assessments are better than quantitative, those people are also wrong. They are two different ways. They both have their strengths. They both have their limitations. The assessments are always better if they include both. And for a public reporting, we simply are talking about what are the indicators, the evidence, the documentation to provide the public, to inform them that what we are doing is worth doing and that what we are doing is better than what we used to be doing. In short, we need to show that our students are now better today than they were yesterday. We have to report because the public in fact has a right to know. Now the fact that we're not going to stop legislators from asking for test scores anyway is rather immaterial. The more positive side is that as parents, as voters, as taxpayers, as business people, as parents, as a community at large, they have a right to know how we're doing and we have an obligation to be able to tell them. And although it may be unfortunate, it is also inevitable that simply "trust my judgment, we're doing a good job" isn't sufficient. It isn't sufficient in education. It isn't sufficient in other areas of public life. Explaining to the public is the process of assessment.

In our study group, we did go off into a broader concept of assessment, not just for public reporting, but really the whole area of program evaluation. Program evaluation does not need to refer to a new program or to a new intervention; it can be very broad. But in a program evaluation, we really need to make sure that we assess what current conditions are. I say that in part because if you don't know where you are, and if you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. In the Boston Compact discussion, and the business community discussion, there was an assertion that the dropout rate was greater at the end of the Boston Compact than at the start. Now I don't know what the data are at all, but I thought it was interesting that the

program officer, although he couldn't challenge the assertion, said, "I don't think we ever knew what the dropout rate was to start with." Well, this is part of the assessment of the current conditions. If you don't know what you've got now, how are you going to be able to document whether any worthwhile changes are taking place? So we need to assess current programs. We need to be able to describe and document whatever the interventions are that we're talking about or we're proposing to do. We need to make sure that we can talk about the effect of these interventions, singular or plural, on those who are charged with this implementation. What is the effect of the proposed intervention on teachers who are asked to implement it? What are the effects of the intervention on the environment within which we work, the larger context? And then ultimately and most importantly, what are the effects of the intervention on students and how we had changed them, hopefully for the better?

We believe it's most important for teachers and administrators, and this is repetitive of things we've said before, to work together and to take the initiative to present their successes. I know of no group that is more defensive and more reactionary than educators. The press always puts their story first on the front page and our defenses on the last. We rarely take the initiative to take our data and present our case and to sell ourselves. We have to market our success, just like everybody else. And if we are reluctant to do so, then it's only natural that others will come to make their own story. And when those come from the outside and look in, the news is always "man bites dog," not the other way around. So we have to find our successes and we have to market those successes to the publics we serve. We need to be more proactive, and to do this familiar litany, we have to have more time in the school. It's got to be a collaborative effort of administrators and teachers who have the time to look at the data, to obtain the data, to present the data, to talk about their successes, and to talk about it in the larger public forums that are available for them. So rather than our sitting here talking to each other, I should be talking to the Kiwanis and you should be talking to the Rotarians. How do we involve that community in our work and in our successes?

There is a prepared statement that comes out of our group that focuses on the assessment of educational outcomes. I will read it as written by other members of the panel and edited much too early this morning by me. One important part of the larger assessment issue concerns the clarification and the monitoring of student achievement goals and ways that can be reported and understood by the variety of "persons distant from the

classroom," a term of Andy Porter that I like very much. Those people who are "distant from the classroom" do not necessarily mean just the general public; it often also means school administrators.

Assessment requires clarification; what are the outcomes of interest and how do we define them? If we aren't able to define the outcomes of interest, then how can we ever hope to be able to assess them? Current methodology for doing the assessments are grossly inadequate and, in many cases, harmful. I'm pleased that the reading community came out with a recommendation concerning the teaching of the discrete skills. We think this is a particular area where tests in the discrete skills, in reading and writing in particular, are quite harmful both to curriculum and to instruction. Those kinds of tests should not be used.

We also believe that normative scales, grade levels, percentiles, stanines, normal curve equivalent, regardless of the tests that those scales are associated with, can do only one thing and that is to report the comparative performance of students at a point in time to another group of students. Norms, by definition, cannot say anything about what students are capable of doing. Normative scales are woefully inadequate in trying to assess growth. So no matter how good or bad the test is, you can't use normative scales to do most of the things that we want done in educational assessments. We do want to assess what students know and what they are able to do. Our assessments should include a balance between knowledge of concepts and of facts, as well as the ability to use that knowledge to reason and to solve problems and to communicate.

We need to assess the breadth of knowledge of specific courses typically taught in high school, but we need to move beyond simply the assessment of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and into the English, the social studies, the sciences, the mathematics, and the physical education which are simply a broad set of examples. We need to show that what our schools are trying to accomplish and what our students are learning is so much more broadly based than simply how well they can read or write or compute. We want our assessments to make sure that they challenge students to do their best and we should avoid assessments that focus on minimums. We need assessments designed to show what students are able to do and we want the assessments to emphasize what students are able to do and what they know, rather than what students are unable to do and what they do not know.

There are several central characteristics. We think assessment procedures must be capable of describing progress over time. Assessment procedures

must be secure and sufficiently defined. They must assure that all students in all programs have a fair chance to perform at their best. The procedures must be sufficiently efficient, so that they can be used on a wide scale. The reporting of assessment results must make clear how all of the students are doing, and it must be reported in disaggregated fashion.

There are some individual assessment devices that we think are quite good. But, there are no assessment programs, broad-based programs currently, that we are aware of, that meet all of these criteria. The recommendation for NUA is that, one, NUA should identify those assessment devices or procedures, specific ones, that seem to meet these criteria. Two, NUA should support R&D efforts to develop new assessment procedures that will meet these criteria. And three, NUA should promote better assessment practices among all schools.

Just one final comment. The panel does support a statement that was made in our panel session about something that apparently is happening here in New York, and that's happening across the country: large group assessments of students from kindergarten and first grade, for a variety of purposes, not the least of which is determining whether or not students are ready to enter various grades. We find that particularly damaging and insulting and we're opposed to it.

IMPROVING THINKING SKILLS OF STUDENTS

Barbara Z. Presseisen

I want to thank the people on my panel, Dave Perkins and Beau Jones who were at our study group yesterday and contributed enormously to it. I also want to thank Susan Shardy from Yeshiva University who served the 22 wonderful people in our group and who labored hard to check our language and ideas so that we would report with accuracy. I also want to thank Vivian Cross, who's from Hartford, here at TC in the Inquiry program (Educational Administration) for helping us. Interestingly enough, we took our task a little differently. We'll reiterate many of the things that you heard certainly from math and science and reading and testing.

We focused in large part, however, not only on what is happening in the teaching "thinking" movements, but also how what is happening in those movements comes into a juncture with what this National Urban Alliance is trying to do and could go forward with. So in fact, we redefined the reform issue, not just for our area, although that's a very active thing in the country today and in the world. We see that the teaching of thinking is very much a part of the restructuring efforts and could

be an important juncture for this Alliance and where it goes. So our recommendations, of which there are seven major goals, are for the Alliance. We are quite confident our area is going to continue moving if we can all do something about it. Our group represented a variety of people who have come to this conference. We have teachers. We have service assistance personnel and staff development personnel. We have university people. We have R&D people. We have special ed people. We have early childhood people. We have a graduate student from Singapore who's going back and taking all this to the Pacific Rim.

We did three things as we talked in the process. We were very wary of our language. We wanted to make sure that when we wrote up the report that the words would mean what they said, and so we had to write in place to some extent. We had to develop a preamble to show where we came from, which I wanted. We also went back into research and documented those compelling things that we think are out there in research that we could focus on our topic, the teaching of thinking. And then we set our large goals and separated those from many kinds of practices and activities that could happen, given those goals. So I'll report to you in the exact language of the preamble. I'll tell you the research phase, and then I'll tell you the seven goals.

In light of the current serious needs to serve at-risk students in American cities and in the interest of better preparing all youngsters for a competitive future, which demands that learners be able to use their mental capacities to the fullest, the following recommendations are presented by our study group for further action by the National Urban Alliance.

In this statement, teaching thinking is defined as a strategic, curricular, instructional, and assessment approach to education, involving long-term efforts to mediate youngsters' development, to facilitate critical and creative activities, to motivate and inspire this position and knowledge pursuit that underlie a lifelong discipline. I'm from Philadelphia; we write preambles all the time!

Given that definition, we have three lessons of research that we believe we stand upon. First, a growing body of international research about the cognitive development of youngsters provides compelling evidence that, with supportive instruction and sustained careful attention, all children can become more effective thinkers. All children, urban and metropolitan children, are part of a whole.

Second, effective schools research emphasizes the importance of high expectations for the success of children as thoughtful learners in urban schools.

Third, instructional research indicates that well-prepared teachers and a supportive school culture are essential elements in creating a community of thinkers. And we think we can document all of that.

Given that sense of research, we have seven goals for the Alliance, which rest on what we think came out of the meat of our discussion of what needs to be recognized in our area of teaching higher order thinking.

First, we need to promote teaching higher-order thinking as a major force in improving education in urban school districts, not just for the gifted but for everybody.

Second, we have to address, or the Alliance should address, teaching thinking as a central concern of restructuring urban schools, including the re-evaluation of educational, i.e., remedial (sic), policies for at-risk students.

Third, we think that the Urban Alliance should advocate the integration of higher-order thinking in all content areas, in all programs for students of all ages and abilities. We are reiterating several of the former speakers.

We think the Alliance should recommend multiple and authentic, not normed assessment, of students' performance that demonstrates the results of their thinking.

Fifth, we think the Alliance should create and foster networks with organizations and agencies that have successful teaching-thinking programs, or can provide services to assist the development of teaching thinking in urban schools. We have to enable people who are working in schools.

Sixth, the Urban Alliance should seek and share information regarding human, fiscal, programmatic, and technological resources that urban districts can pursue in their efforts to improve children's thinking.

And last, the Alliance should demand that teacher education, including ongoing staff development, prepare teachers and administrators to carry out the curricular, instructional, and assessment tasks that are necessary to implement the teaching of thinking and to assess the effectiveness of those efforts. Now, those are the seven goals that we think are the emphasis.

We talked a lot about the kinds of possibilities of specific tasks. I'll just give you some examples. We think it's important to disseminate information about teaching thinking in a form that is relevant and usable by the various constituencies involved in urban education. And, there are many constituencies. We think that it's important to promote an ongoing dialogue and collaborative planning about teaching thinking among those various constituencies in the urban sites. It's that dialogue about what you mean when you use the word

problem-solving, or critical thinking, or decision-making, or cognition, or metacognition or episemic cognition, which didn't even get mentioned yesterday. Those are the things about which real dialogue needs to take place, all the way down to the classroom and with the parent. Not in the fancy language of education in all cases. So we have to watch whom we're speaking with and what they understand. We need to start those dialogues and enable them.

Most important, perhaps, we need to identify organizations and agencies that can provide information, materials, and services that support the development of higher order thinking skills. That's probably the first task. Working with the agencies that this Alliance will need to network with, we have to know where we can go and plan our way. My last point is that it's the follow-up of these recommendations that really count. We can write flowery preambles or we can watch our details very carefully, but where we go from today, where we take what we can learn as we gather our notes, and plan where we go further is the important next step. We think perhaps there will be task forces or groups who can be pulled out of this wonderful assembly we have had here at Teachers College, and who can move forward for a national agenda. We'd like to be part of that. Many of the people in our group certainly reiterated that desire to pursue these goals.

COMMUNITY ISSUES RELATED TO URBAN REFORM

Francis A.J. Ianni and Robert Witherspoon

I would like to quickly explain why Bob is here with me. He's not here to present a minority report in either sense of the word "minority." Neither is he here to make sure that I don't use the half of my speech that I had to leave out and say that everybody subscribed to it. Rather he is here because there is one overarching principle for what we want to say: neither principals nor professors nor politicians nor publishers can speak for the community. The community has a right to speak for itself. And so, I've asked Bob if he would share with me some of the recommendations coming from our panel. In fact, what we want to do is to suggest that the next time we meet, that we think much more carefully about community involvement. Just as we made a great deal of noise about student involvement in the 1960s when they were restive, we now need to engage a community that may be passive. Shortly after, when students started asking questions on tenure committees like, "Why do you have to have tenure at all?," we began to get rid of them very quickly. We have to have this kind of rela-

tionship with the community—an asking of difficult questions.

We have a slight preamble also. Let me read it very quickly, and then tell you the various points that we want to make. We bit bullets also, and these are essentially the points that we want to recommend to this group. First, the preamble. Communities tend to respond to what they see as the immediate needs of individual institutional areas: improving education, finding or creating new jobs, strengthening families, separating good kids from bad. But youngsters themselves are much more likely to experience problems holistically: as a sense of failure, as something learned or better forgotten, or as a matter of bad luck or poor fate control. Ultimately we think what is important is the incorporation of a community-based, not a school-based sense of governance and a sense of involvement. To say it as we said it on the panel, we think that effective communities are a necessary parallel, if not a prerequisite, for effective schools.

Now with that in mind, these are the principles that we would like to see established. First, we think that personal contact is what's most important for community involvement. We applaud the notion of the principal standing in the door to welcome the community in. But, we think that's not enough. We think that we have to go out into the community in order to get the kinds of involvement that is good for us. To put it differently, we would like to reverse President Kennedy's notion and say, "Ask not what we can do for people in the community, but what they can do for us" because that's where I think it becomes really important. That kind of personal contact becomes very important, and we think that such contacts have to be organized. The problem is that as we make new notions of community involvement possible there is less public support for such involvement. If you look at the difference between the reports of the 1960s and 1970s and the national reports now, one of the great differences is that there was earlier a great deal of talk about community involvement. We hear virtually nothing about community involvement, certainly not in the effective schools literature. We think that's a mistake.

In addition to personal contact, we think it's important to think about new roles in education. We had a long and sometimes rancorous discussion in our group about who should fill these new roles. There were some of us who felt that it's necessary to create new roles. Some believe that if we're going to organize communities, we've got to have individuals who know the community and who come from the community. If we really want to talk about parental involvement, let's

use parents in that process, but not just the twelve parents who decide to attend a meeting or the two who decide to run for the school board. We've got to reach beyond them and become much more involved.

Second, we think that these new roles should also include new roles for teachers. To that extent, we feel that those of us in the universities deserve some criticism because we have simply not thought about those new roles. We haven't thought about the possibilities of training educational organizers for working in the community. We haven't thought about a range of possibilities.

Very quickly, I want to comment on our past relations with families. I happen to have been responsible, along with the National Science Foundation, for financing the new math. My son had to take one of those courses in the fifth grade. He came home and said to me, "Father, I know what's wrong with that course that you and the National Science Foundation spent all the money on. I understand it. The other kids understand it; but, the teacher doesn't understand it." And I want to add to that what we've learned since my son's analysis: parents didn't understand it.

Since curriculum reform depends on parental understandings, what we have to do is to work out a process to engage and work with families. We are going to call on publishers to make certain that no textbook or video text is ever prepared again that does not have an instructor's manual, but even more important, a parents' guide, so that parents can work along with their children.

We also believe very strongly that when we talk about community we have a tendency to think only about parents. Communities are more than parents. There are other individuals and other organizations involved. We think that it's necessary, for example, to consider the potential use of large numbers of senior citizens, who at this point are antagonistic to school bond issues. Seniors have a great deal to offer to youngsters; not just presence, not even just caring, but some notion of how one can go about developing one's life. We have found that young people we come in contact with want the same things that we want for them. They want a good family, a good job, and a happy and healthy life. I think it's necessary for us to help them develop that sense of growth into adulthood.

Not only must all agencies be involved, but we've also had some long and somewhat rancorous discussion about inclusion of the church. Someone pointed out that the woman who was responsible for getting the school prayers dropped, eventually moved to Texas, and the son over whom the court case was carried out

is now a born-again Christian. But that's not what we're talking about. We don't necessarily want the reintroduction of prayers in schools. But churches are a vital part of most communities, and so we feel we must learn how to include them in our school-community program.

Next, we talked about the necessity of making sure that as we talk about these new responsibilities for teachers. We don't suggest that they walk the extra mile and then give them neither the time nor the resources to do it. It's necessary that we consider teachers and their interests in this restructuring process.

We've got to remember that we are dealing with a very large number of models throughout the country that seem to be working. Yet some of us sat there, listening, and learning things for the first time. So we want to place another charge on the Alliance. It is not only that the Alliance must bring the community in as allies, but we've also got to start documenting what we're doing. We need to make sure that we don't have the same problems that beset the poverty program and beset the alternative school program. Because they did not have a research base, because they didn't have some body of theory that they contributed to, they simply did not become institutionalized as they should. So we call for that kind of documentation.

Finally, we think it's important to keep in mind that support systems in the community are absolutely essential for young people, for schools, and for teachers as well.

We have five principles that we think are important. We think the support systems have to grow out of natural settings. These systems must model the social ties that people are used to in the process of developing. If those ties are changing, then we've got to look at our roles as well. We can no longer have schools where the principal follows the role-model notion of the father in the family, the stern disciplinarian, or where the teacher is simply a replacement for the notion of the mother who's responsible for growth and development. We've got to model what happens in our community and follow that model.

Second, we think community relations should be affiliative and not imposed. We don't think it is the school's responsibility to impose organization upon community groups but rather to work with them.

Third, I've noted the notion of theory and research: the need to document the success generated by the alliance in urban settings.

Fourth, we think we have to give people in the community some sense of control over what's happening. As we talk about school-based governance, we

really should be talking about community-based governance, because it has to involve the total community and be about the community.

Finally, we think that it's important for adults to validate what youngsters learn in school. Children come home in some families and say, "I learned two plus two is four," and the parents say, "That's wonderful! That's wonderful! Here are some other examples." Other kids come home and say the same thing, and get no response. So validation becomes important, and we think that's part of our training process for adults. So what I'll do at this point is turn it over to Bob.

BOB WITHERSPOON

I want to thank the planners of the conference for including representative parent groups in an effort like this. Normally, we're not included. So obviously in thinking of community, you wanted to ensure that you had firsthand community opinions from the beginning. We can't be afraid to reach out to the community, to involve the community. There's nothing we have to hide. We're all taxpayers. So, we've got to make a really concerted effort to reach out to the community. We have especially to consider the community in which we each live. Many of us and many of our schools are becoming rapidly, largely non-English communities. Many are considered limited English proficiency communities, with large numbers of people who can't read. Adult literacy has to be considered in our outreach effort. We must look for much broader types of participation, because that's only going to improve our schools in the long run.

One of the things that I keep hearing over and over again, if we're going to be able to do any of this, is time. There's going to have to be more time, and a major restructuring in our schools concerning time and time allocation.

Another point, we've got to look at more extensive mentoring efforts. We had a very diverse group. We had principals. We had teachers. We had community people. We had students. It was a very diverse group. They all endorsed the need for more extensive mentoring efforts, not just so-called role models. Role models usually flash through for one semester or one year. We need a team of caring people who will become friends, not just to the student, but to that whole family. If there are families in need, families who have problems in the community, there has to be a team of people around those families. Often we have found that the children in our schools who have low self-esteem have families

who still suffer from that same low self-esteem. Just focusing on the child is not going to help to improve family life.

We talked about this whole issue of training. That's a very important concern. Training does not happen enough and when it does happen, it is one-sided. We just train parents or we just train staff, but we don't train the two together. By training I don't always necessarily mean just a structured training program. Just sit-down rap sessions are very useful—rap sessions between people of the community, often in the community. It doesn't have to take place at school. We've got to find a way to bridge that gap of communication, that gap where one does not trust the other. We've got to really focus on direct interaction much more.

One of the people in our group yesterday talked about the need to have a "complete school orientation." They saw this in one of the school districts they visited, perhaps in Dade County. In this particular school, the janitor, the custodian, the cafeteria worker, the teachers, the librarians, everybody who was involved at that school met on a regular basis around education, talking about what's going on in that school around kids. He said he saw cafeteria workers talking to kids in line about what they were learning in school. We need to start with that, but then we need to move it to the community. We especially must include office and security personnel. Often, when people visit our schools, the first person they come in contact with is a clerk or a security person. Too often, that person is not sensitized and does not feel he is a part of that school. They must learn to see themselves as a part of that school community team. Once the school team is trained, it must move to the community to talk to the community about what's going on in the school and about why the team needs community support. We really have got to figure out how to do this and we've got to let the models that are working be known.

I've learned so much in these three days about things that are working. We've got to somehow get that published, get that knowledge out there on a much broader basis. I think Barbara Sizemore mentioned it best yesterday. Those of us involved in schools can't wait for this training to be organized by someone else. We've got to go back Monday morning and become risk-takers at whatever cost it means, because that's the nature of the crisis we are facing.

Finally, we've got to revise the terminology that we use to talk about students. If you come to the community and talk about "at-risk" kids, the community is not going to want to get involved. We have got to change our terminology. We talked about the nation being at

risk. Now we put that down to the kids being at risk. The nation was at risk. The nation is still at risk. Kids are only one facet of that. So we've got to watch how we use our language. We can't continue to talk about the "disadvantaged" and "at-risk" students, all that jargon, because people are not going to get involved. If schools say, "Hey, my kid's at risk....," you know, people are not going to accept that. We've got to quit labeling our children. I know we do it in our meetings, but we've got to break out of that mold. We've got to figure out how to deal with this on a regular human-to-human basis.

THE ROLE OF BUSINESS AND FOUNDATIONS IN SCHOOL REFORM

Santee Ruffin

I must first admit that I have been participating in a cultural bias over a number of years and was not aware of it. I used to think if I went to Texas or Louisiana and they said we'd get started somewhere around nine o'clock, that was just part of the area. When we had a study group meeting at 8:45, the comments I heard the rest of the day were, "Where in New York do you meet at 8:45?" The culture shock of an early meeting was so great that we had no one at our study group session in the morning.

We had a very exciting and very interesting general session on the whole business, school-business, partnerships, the role of the school, businesses and foundations in school reform. More than ever, business and foundations have a genuine interest in participating in the effort to reform schools. That idea of genuine interest was accompanied by some movement of chairs and what have you, when the partnership explanation was first stated, but as the discussion went on, there were indications, actually some examples of schools where genuine interest was evident. One of the points that was somewhat alarming, while being representative of the foundations, who were somewhat concerned about it themselves, is the fact that only ten percent, approximately ten percent, of foundation money goes to elementary and secondary education—that's ten percent of foundation education money.

It was a general feeling that foundations tend to support pilot programs. But, they're not interested in sustaining programs for school districts, and that's still the main responsibility of the school within the state funding program: to sustain programs. There was also something of an admission, if you will, that there's a tendency among donors to put money behind the "sure

thing." Those are the ones that are likely to go on.

Some of the projects that are a little more risky sit on the shelf and maybe get funded somewhere down the line. Speakers challenged the idea that business/foundations were only interested in low-risk projects. There was an expression that maybe there would be a change in that kind of no-risk attitude, if real school changes were likely to occur, especially at the local-school level. Foundations want to support the risk-takers, but, as I said, they also want to support the sure thing.

A foundation opinion, more than anything else, served as a reminder to the group that there's a serious need for educational reform. One phrase that came out quite often was the notion of "a window of opportunity—" that we must take advantage of this window of opportunity or the window might close, leaving schools shut out. The statement related to our use of the existing opportunity for real change was that the freer choice for parents among schools is a prelude to real choice. The idea was left at that.

Corporate America could do a lot more. That was the agreement. However, the group was reminded, if we took a look at what went on 20 years ago, ten years ago, five years ago, and today, and what's projected in terms of the business community having a sincere interest in what happens to urban schools and wanting to be part of the reform movement in a very positive way, that we have both made progress in our relations and have some better things to look forward to. There are better days ahead.

During the question-and-answer session, there was a suggestion that school-business partnerships have failed. It wasn't qualified too much. One particular program, the Boston Compact, was singled out. The thought was that it might fail in one spot, but that a similar type of program has produced some very positive results somewhere else. So we were urged to be cautious before we generalize about whether school-business partnerships are of any value to urban schools. We should make sure that we identify a range of specific situations before we attempt to generalize.

It came out, and not too subtly, that there's still some suspicion as to what the role of business really is in working with schools. One of the comments I heard 20 years ago is indicative of one point of view, "Well, we don't tell them how to make bridges. Why should they be telling us how to run schools?" We also know that financial matters are tight in urban school districts. We need all the support we can get, even if it's temporary. We need support in terms of new programs to be funded. We need support in helping school boards

recognize that schools and new programs are working. We especially need help in finding the money to sustain them, and that means taxes. Business partners can help to make sure that the states are challenged to pick up programs that are successful.

After our enlightening discussions, I now recognize that there's still a lot of grayness out there, gray areas in terms of what community involvement means and what foundation and business involvement in schools is really all about. Related to that, if we're talking about recommendations, we're talking about seeking a higher percentage of the foundation dollar for elementary and secondary schools. That came out loud and clear. There's a related need to allow and to encourage school administrators to be creative in how money is used to meet the educational needs in individual schools.

There was another strong point: the question is not only how can corporate America help save individual urban schools across the country, but how can we make use of that interest. How can we be creative in forming a partnership that is influential beyond an individual school or school district. Floretta McKenzie was in the audience. She pointed out that in certain situations where one small business or medium-sized business takes an interest in a given school and shows that it's interested in the kids and interested in improving not only their current educational experience but maybe their lifestyles and life experiences later in life, those kids feel better and perform because they know that somebody cares. It doesn't have to be a glorified program that gets a lot of coverage and a lot of fanfare.

I remind folks that some of the most recent positive publicity has been related to Eugene Lang who guaranteed a college education to a group of kids in one school. If you followed up on that, you would find there have been numbers of other schools and individuals and foundations and corporations that have emulated that kind of operation. School districts are appreciative and kids are feeling proud. Board members are feeling proud. So we say, as another part of the recommendation, there's a need for clarification for the practitioner and for others who are interested as to what corporations and foundations can and should do in individual schools. It is not clear. Perhaps we have thought in too narrow and too traditional ways about our relationship.

We think that there should be a user-friendly manual on what business, schools, and foundations can do to assist urban schools. I pointed out to the group that even with all the money that was involved in *Labor Force 2000: Corporate America Responds*, there was no source where we could get copies of it. It's the all-state forum

on public issues. Essentially it's a manual for business people to explain how they can get involved in the whole education effort. So we're suggesting that maybe the same kind of manual is needed by the schools. We also need a very formal approach to making sure that people in the field, in the schools, running the school districts, really understand what school-business partnerships are about and understand the whole role of corporate America in education. We also need a manual that considers how we make best use of foundations. We recommend that the Alliance encourage the foundations to put more of their dollars into urban schools.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN BUILDING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

John W. Smith

In order to give you a sense of the context of our discussion, let me first define "government" as we thought about it. The role of government is to promote people's interests by defining people's needs, and developing resources to meet those needs through the redesigning of governmental relationships and governmental systems and through the restructuring of them in relation to the improvement and enhancement of national productivity for the information age.

Those of us who have been in Washington for some time are responsive to sensible advice, when we get it. As I was preparing for our panel discussion, I was reminded of advice from Miss Piggy: "Never eat anything you can't lift." As we look at proposals for what government can do to support urban education, we need to ask Miss Piggy's question: can we lift it—can we get the support it takes to get the proposal onto the legislative plate for dinner?

The model for discussion of the role of government is Professor Frank Smith's proposal to use the agricultural system funded by the Federal government as a model for developing County agent-like programs in urban communities to meet educational needs of urban school youth, rather than rural youth. Agricultural county agents help farmers, meaning both adults and school youth, learn about new farming technologies, because of the agent's joint appointment as a county extension agent and as a faculty member at the state's land grant university system.

County agents develop and implement special programs for farm youth, emphasizing the importance of public school attendance, farm work, and a college education for more profitable farming. In developing the

Urban County Agent model, government would have the following roles.

1. Federal—establish funding policy and guidelines for the program. Specify other resources, and draft into laws.
2. State—contribute funding, set standards for involved institutions (state education agency, corporations, unions, higher education institutions, government departments, and schools).
3. City—develop coordination and advisory arms; develop benefits for corporations and others to participate; build infrastructures, especially with whole industries, such as tourism, communications, health services, etc.
4. Federal/State/Regional/City—build by passing mechanisms to aid in program implementation across governmental lines and to avoid bureaucratic redtape.
5. NUA—support discussions.

The model for urban county extension agents focuses on the need to link work to university research, as agricultural extension agents did for agriculture and rural farming. Such a "linked system" is what we referred to as a "functional community," a set of people who can make clear to youth how they can move back and forth between work and school from elementary school through higher education at the land grant university in broad occupational areas in addition to agriculture. There is a traditional notion that most people know and follow a linear path that says, "You go to school, then college, then you get a job."

In a functional community, the boundaries between school, college, and work are neither linear nor so sharply defined. The "urban county agent" serves to steer youth through the twisting path that moves through schooling and work with some sense of purpose.

Based upon the agricultural extension service's 4-H Club, an urban functional community with links to the land grant university and urban occupations might reflect the following characteristics.

INCORPORATES AN OCCUPATIONAL FOCUS that highlights what adults do to make community life possible, e.g., housing, transportation, health services, etc.

LINKS OCCUPATIONAL ACTIVITIES WITH ADULTS TO UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH to emphasize learning as problem-solving and to orient students to college.

INTELLECTUALIZES EXPERIENCES RELATED TO OCCUPATIONAL AREAS, ESPECIALLY BY USING

MATH/SCIENCE as ways of seeing problems in order to develop critical cognitive skills and intellectual curiosity.

REQUIRES ACTIVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT in order to generate a sense of utility and continuity between student learning, family life, and adult work.

SUSTAINS ENGAGEMENT OVER PERIOD OF ADOLESCENCE so that growth of occupational interests is possible.

PROVIDES FOR PROGRESSION OF LEADERSHIP ROLES within the program in order to encourage social responsibility and to develop a sense of efficacy.

REQUIRES YOUTH TO CONDUCT INDIVIDUALLY DEVELOPED PROJECTS in order to teach self-sufficiency and entrepreneurial attitudes.

ORGANIZES SOME PROJECTS AS COMPETITIVE TEAM ACTIVITIES in order to create both competitive and collaborative social skills with team support.

INCORPORATES VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP, from areas of adult occupations with support from business in order to broaden youth's interaction with adults from the larger community.

PROVIDES FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS OF YOUTHS' COMPETENCIES in their occupationally related projects in order to inform public and to strengthen youths' sense of efficacy.

PROVIDES LEISURE ACTIVITIES WITH TRAINING for success, including camps, in order to promote independence, social, and emotional development.

PROVIDES DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES AT OCCUPATIONAL WORK/STUDY SITES with incentives to encourage growth in competencies.

ENGAGES NEAR-PEERS AND OLDER MENTORS in order to provide socialization and informal learning.

USES PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND FACILITIES for activities in order to extend experiences in adult settings.

PROVIDES TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES AND A RANGE OF INTERDEPENDENT TASKS in order to teach responsibility and collaboration.

VARIES ROLES FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS by linking to other educational settings and conducting non-classroom learning activities.

PROVIDES EQUITABLE ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY AND NEEDED RESOURCES.

SCHOOL STAFF FREQUENTLY RECOGNIZED AS MEMBERS OF COLLEGE FACULTY to support notion of educational continuity.

INVOLVES INTERAGENCY ADVISORY OR GOVERNING BOARD in order to promote community responsibility for youths' education.

The basis for the role of government in building school communities is outlined below.

- to identify natural educational needs for the betterment of the national interest;
- to design, develop, and implement the necessary responses—legislative, as implemented by an executive government to improve rural school communities;
- to build collaborative collegial connections and relationships to encourage, motivate positive change necessary to promote and strengthen national interest for effective schooling (Congressional members/staff involvement with NUA);
- to evaluate/assess programs—build in mechanisms for positive resolve;
- to aid citizenry in achieving the quest for effective communities.

What the federal government needs to do to help build school communities is to provide equity through equal educational opportunity that is assured and promoted by the government. Government should help education provide for excellence in the quality of teaching and efforts to provide learning experiences. It should respond to key needs that deal with specific teacher shortages, for example, those that provide funds for innovation, funds for teacher/academician research, and programs that relate to school and work. Government should enhance the House Bill 151 capability, pass Hawkins Child Care Bill, and provide adequate monies for students to attend college (through loans), and allow for parental input into the educational process.

Efforts should be made to promote funding for learning "what works" in education. Consideration was given to England's Educational Reform Act that allows for choice in education at a national level. Each school is able to decide how to spend its budget. This funding and governance plan appears to encourage better school community relationships than were found under earlier arrangements.

The primary role of NUA is to stimulate debate about educational policy and to influence decisions so that urban communities and schools can provide greater success for youth.

NATIONAL URBAN ALLIANCE FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATION (NUA)

NUA was founded in 1988 to formalize and extend relationships previously created among several school systems, community groups and institutions of higher learning by the successful, research-based staff development activities of The College Board. The purpose of the activities was to foster in literacy and to identify measurable outcomes in a more authentic manner than that provided by traditional instructional support practices. The results led to an evolution of a professional development program, characterized by a clear educational philosophy that valued active learning and increased responsibility on the part of learners, and a collaboration committed to bringing cognitive research into urban schools.

Consultants and client school districts identified the program's most effective instructional strategies, which were illustrated and discussed in the best-selling book entitled *Reading, Thinking, and Concept Development*, co-edited by a founder of NUA and published by The College Board. The success of these strategies and the systematic, coherent approach to staff development they exemplified has been documented by the recent research of Levine and Sherk (1990).

Additional support and recognition for the program's success came from the MacArthur Foundation as a \$400,000 award to The College Board and an NUA co-founder for the production of a PBS video documentary, "A Cry from the Edge," and a series of instructional videotapes, "Reading, Thinking, and Concept Development." When completed, these videos and the accompanying guides will become part of NUA's library of support materials available to urban and metropolitan communities.

The mission of NUA is to create a national community of urban schools dedicated to offering equal opportunity for success to all students. Participation is built around collaborative efforts among school districts, universities, non-profit education agencies, and private industry. Participating school districts are supported by professional development services and have the benefit of learning from others regarding school governance structure, instructional practices, and the use of technol-

ogy to promote active learning.

NUA reflects a new perspective for governance teaching and learning based on an assumption that only well planned collaborations among families, civic and other organizations, media, cultural institutions, universities, and workplaces can urban schools nurture the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of their students. This vision is captured within the mission of NUA—one which is based on a passionate belief that all students can be taught to perform the higher order academic tasks demanded by a changing global community.

Though NUA is a very young organization, among its accomplishments to date are the following:

- In partnership with Teachers College, Columbia University and The College Board, NUA organized in 1989 this successful national educational forum on urban and metropolitan schooling.
- The forum included a two-hour teleconference, since broadcast by PBS and seen by an estimated 200,000+ audience.
- A "Declaration on Urban Education" was disseminated to the President of the United States, senators and members of Congress, governors, and over 1,000 school superintendents.
- A position paper on assessment has been distributed to legislators, community and foundations leaders, and over 500 school systems and university representatives.
- A national study based on one of several NUA models has been released. The results suggest three to five years student academic improvement for each year of instruction. Key factors are effective school correlates and cognitive staff development.
- Professional development programs for teachers and principals are being conducted in cities across the country.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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